Tourism In Alberta

A discussion paper prepared for the Alberta Conservation Strategy Project

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Tourism in Alberta

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FOREWORD

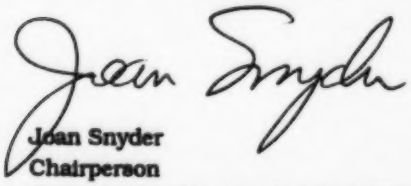
In late 1985, the Public Advisory Committees to the Environment Council of Alberta began working toward a draft conservation strategy for Alberta. The Public Advisory Committees (PACs), comprising representatives of some 120 non-government organizations, are in many ways an ideal organization for developing a strategy that should touch the lives of all Albertans. The PACs bring together many diverse viewpoints, we are non-partisan, and we have members from across the province. Since the early days of the project, we have welcomed non-PAC participants, and have been delighted to receive the contributions of civil servants, industry spokespeople, academics, and the general public.

We have made progress since 1985: the *Prospectus for an Alberta Conservation Strategy* has been published and many meetings and workshops have been held. The principle of a conservation strategy increasingly has been endorsed by Albertans, and Alberta has been recognized across Canada as a leader in conservation strategy development. There have been important related events. For example, in September of 1987, every environment minister in Canada endorsed the final report of the National Task Force on Environment and Economy, which recommended that conservation strategies be in place in every province and territory by 1992. This same report was endorsed by the First Ministers at their November, 1987 meeting.

We will have a conservation strategy for Alberta, we hope by 1990, the Canadian Year of the Environment. Our work continues in the expectation that all those who are interested will have a chance to contribute to the project, through public hearings or some other public participation process.

Since the publication of the *Prospectus*, the PACs have concentrated on preparing sectoral discussion papers. The Conservation Strategy Steering Committee determined early on to produce background papers on relevant sectors, such as agriculture, fish and wildlife, tourism, oil and gas, and others. These discussion papers look at the issues within each sector, but, more importantly, they investigate the interaction of each sector with the others. Their preparation has involved consulting with a wide range of interest groups — a conservation strategy principle in action — which has proven fruitful in developing ideas about the ultimate conservation strategy. These discussion papers will be used as background information for drafting a conservation strategy document and, perhaps, in the future, in public hearings on the draft conservation strategy. This report is one in the series of discussion papers.

Because there are as many opinions on our best future direction as there are Albertans, we welcome comments. The conservation strategy will be only as good as the work that goes into preparing it. Please address any comments on this discussion paper or others in the series to the Environment Council of Alberta at the address given on the page opposite. I would also encourage you to make your opinions known at public hearings or other events as they are held. Let's treat Alberta as if we plan to stay!



Joan Snyder
Chairperson
Conservation Strategy Steering Committee
Public Advisory Committees to the Environment Council of Alberta

ABOUT THIS DISCUSSION PAPER

Tourism in Alberta looks at the present and possible future partnership of tourism and the environment. The requirements of a healthy tourism industry for a healthy and attractive environment are discussed, and the positive and negative impacts of tourism on the environment are examined. The report points out the subsequent implications for policy development in Alberta, including the desirability of a Provincial Tourism Master Plan.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Tourism in Alberta has benefitted from the professional contacts, commentaries, and discussions that I have engaged in with many individuals interested in tourism and in conservation. This paper owes much to their willingness to share their opinions and perspectives on a topic that has exciting possibilities in Alberta, but complex interrelationships with many other sectors of the economy. I have found the development of this paper both thought-provoking and challenging.

I wish to express my appreciation to those who have provided commentaries or manuscript reviews: Calvin Webb, Mike Kelly, Kim Sanderson, ECA staff; Dr. Betty Andressen, Dr. A.S.A. Mohsen, and Dr. Jim Butler, University of Alberta; Dr. Robert Holmberg, Athabasca University; Colin Jeffares and Jan Bloomfield, Travel Alberta; Walter Urquhart, Beth Russell, and Susan Aris, Tourism Industry Association of Alberta; Peter Boxall and Norbert Kondla, Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife; Aart Looye and Mark Rasmussen, Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism; Ken Morrison, Alberta Recreation and Parks; Alfred Birch, Alberta Agriculture; Bill Shaw, Red Deer Regional Planning Commission; Bill Peel, Energy and Non-Renewable Resources Sub-Committee, Public Advisory Committees, ECA; members of the Environment Protection Sub-Committee of the Public Advisory Committee, ECA — particularly Ron Goodwin, Horst Fauser, Betty Paschen, Betty Beswick, and Dr. Robert Scace. I am grateful for the contributions made by these people; nevertheless, I remain wholly responsible for the ideas and opinions expressed herein. Also, I am indebted to the staff at the ECA for typing, drafting, and editing. Thank you all for your assistance.

Pamela Wight
May 1988

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Chapter One

Tourism In Alberta: Definition, History, and Organization

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this discussion paper is to examine tourism in relation to the six objectives of the Alberta Conservation Strategy. Those are: maintaining essential ecological processes, preserving genetic diversity, sustaining use of species and ecosystems, developing diverse opportunities for use of natural resources, maintaining and improving quality of life, and developing a long-term sustainable economy.

One of the purposes of the Conservation Strategy is to ensure that Alberta's environment remains rich and diverse enough to continue to support a healthy, growing tourism industry. The emphasis here will be on the natural environment.

Some specific objectives of this paper are to examine the economic and social significance of tourism, and the interactions of tourism with other resource users. The intent is to provide a starting point for public discussion about how to sustain tourism in Alberta over a long period of time.

1.2 Definition of Tourism

There is no widespread agreement on who or what a tourist is. Tourists themselves often admit to being hikers, canoeists, sightseers, or visitors, but rarely to being tourists.

In Alberta, tourism is officially defined as "the practice of people travelling outside their home communities for rest, recreation, sightseeing or business" (Alberta Tourism 1987:5). Thus tourism can include the actual travel experience as well as the activities that are part of a trip (Bloomfield 1986), and includes Albertans and non-resident visitors. This definition could also include business travellers and convention delegates, as well as the vacationing public, those visiting friends and relatives, and those travelling for pleasure, shopping, or education. While this definition may not entirely satisfy everyone, it is used throughout the discussion paper. It should also be recognized that much of this paper focuses on the vacationing public, rather than on business travellers.

Some people view tourism as a service industry. These people define tourism as:

> *the businesses, organizations, labor, and government agencies which totally, or in part, provide the means of transport, goods, services, accommodations, and other facilities, programs and resources for travel* (Alberta 1985).

1.3 History of Tourism in Alberta

Tourism is a relatively new industry for many countries. In Alberta, this is certainly true for areas other than Banff and Jasper. The beginnings of tourism in Alberta are closely linked to the westward advance of the railroads, and to the development of mountain national parks, the first of which (Banff National Park, created in 1887) signalled the initial involvement of the federal government in tourism. It is not surprising that Banff was the government's first tourism venture, since its models were the U.S. parks: Yellowstone National Park and Arkansas Hot Springs (Marsh 1983).

The Canadian Pacific Railway hotels at Lake Louise and Banff Springs had been operating for almost two decades before Alberta became a province in 1905. Wealthy travellers were attracted to the spectacular scenic resources of the Rocky Mountains. The Canadian National Railway also forged west, and by the 1920s Jasper Park Lodge had been built for similarly affluent travellers. These resorts have been virtually synonymous with tourism in Alberta and, even today, the mountain parks remain the prime attraction for national and international visitors.

World War II stimulated worldwide interest in travel: people had begun to interact with many other cultures, peoples, and environments and more extensive communications and media led to an increased awareness of attractive destinations. Increased incomes and leisure time and paid vacations facilitated travel by the less wealthy, and improvements in air and auto transportation allowed a greater range and speed of travel.

By the 1950s, the tourism potential of the whole province, not just the mountain parks, had begun to be recognized. Chambers of commerce, transportation companies, hotels, motels, restaurant operators, and associations all began to see that there were advantages in integrated efforts by the travel industry. The industry and government subsequently have co-operated in order to attract tourism dollars to all parts of Alberta.

In the mid fifties a provincial group, "The Romin Empire," was established. It was essentially a light-hearted social group, but in 1962 it developed into a major tourism organization, the Canadian Rockies Tourist Association. This became the Alberta Tourist Association, which was the forerunner of today's Tourism Industry Association of Alberta (TIAALTA).

This evolution coincided with a period that saw massive investment in highway construction, a large increase in automobile traffic, and increasing popularity of camping and trailer travelling. Tourism in Alberta increased due to new air, bus, and rail tour packages; the introduction of credit-card travel; recognition of Alberta as a superb skiing destination; and the province's new image as a four-season vacation destination, the result of improved marketing efforts.

Nearly all of Alberta's tourism industry revenues had been generated by North American travellers up to and during the 1960s, when overseas travellers joined these visitors. Their numbers, although relatively small, increased throughout the 1970s. However, after other Canadian provinces, the United States is Alberta's best potential source of increased tourism revenue.

Table 1. Visitors to Alberta

Tourist Origin	Visitors to Provincial Parks and Recreation Areas (%)	Visitors to Rocky Mountain National Parks (%)	Visitors to all Alberta incl. National and Provincial Parks (%)
Alberta	89.6	57.4	62
Other Canada	8.1	19.9	30
United States	1.7	17.6	6
Overseas	0.5	5.1	2

Source: Alberta 1985; Pannell Kerr Forster 1986.

Parts of the province have developed their tourism potential faster than others, particularly the few areas with better quality lake resources close to urban population centers. Recently, however, rising domestic and international demand for high-quality tourism facilities and services has sparked interest in many parts of the province in several types of services, from restaurants and hotels to waterslides, guest ranches, big game hunting, and water-based adventure activities.

Alberta's major tourism destinations remain the Rocky Mountains and the cities of Edmonton and Calgary. However, the Tourism Industry Association has promoted all tourism zones in the province (Figure 1). As a result, travellers have been encouraged to explore everything from the Badlands near Drumheller and Lakeland's mixture of lakes, forests, and oil-based resources, to

Tourism Zones

1) Chinook Country
2) Gateway
3) Big Country
4) David Thompson Country
5) Battle River
6) Lakeland
7) Evergreen
8) Land of the Mighty Peace
9) Jasper National Park
10) Calgary and District
11) Edmonton
12) Banff National Park
13) Game Country
14) Land of the Midnight Twilight

Figure 1. Tourism Zones in Alberta

Evergreen's rail, forestry, and coal-based resources, and the Land of the Mighty Peace. In addition, the Province's 1985 White Paper on Tourism may have increased the government focus on tourism as a means of economic diversification.

The future thrust for Alberta tourism developments will be in areas outside the Rocky Mountain parks, although it is recognized that the national parks are the principal magnet to attract non-resident visitors.

1.4 Organization of the Tourism Industry

Tourists leave home for a variety of reasons — the "push" factors, or tourist motives and needs. These include health, curiosity, sports, pleasure seeking, spiritual or religious motives, relaxation, and professional or personal reasons. In addition, "pull" factors (or destination attributes) attract them to visit. They include scenic and heritage landscapes, cultural activities, wildlife, and various forms of active and passive entertainment. These attractions are all part of the tourism industry. In addition to the attractions, the industry's other main components are services, infrastructure, hospitality, and promotion (Alberta Tourism 1987).

Services

Tourism services include accommodations (for example, resorts, hotels, motels, campgrounds), food and beverage outlets, gas stations, and other retail businesses serving visitors.

Infrastructure

The infrastructure upon which a tourism industry depends includes such utilities as roads, air and water transportation, parking lots, water and power services, sewage dump stations, and signage.

Hospitality

The people of a region, if they wish, can offer a wealth of cultural resources to tourists, as well as providing the local labor force for tourist services. A critical element in the tourist industry is the attitude the residents have toward tourists. A positive attitude demonstrated by friendly, helpful interactions and non-exploitive business dealings encourages tourists to visit and to return to a particular area.

Promotion

Tourism promotion encompasses the tools used to attract visitors. Promotion may be undertaken by individuals, groups, communities, or the Province. Examples are advertising, travel shows, written articles, brochures, signs, or tourist information centers.

Attractions

Tourism attractions include natural and man-made features as well as events and tours. They constitute the main reason for tourists to visit. In Alberta, the natural resources are still the key attractions. These include the scenic splendor of the terrain, including the mountains, lakes, rivers, and forests, as well as the fish and wildlife that inhabit the various environments. This is the critical base upon which Alberta's tourism industry is built.

In the past, many visitors simply sought to view these resources from a distance. However, there is an increasing trend toward more active non-consumptive use of these natural resources. Such use may include special tourism services such as rafting, canoeing, and other water-based activities, ranch vacations, outfitting (for naturalists, photographers, educational tours, or big game hunters), and fishing opportunities.

Alberta's tourism product, or attractions, may be a natural environment (for example, Wood Buffalo National Park), a man-made environment (West Edmonton Mall), a blend of these (rural landscapes and farm vacations), or a specialized tourist service. However, the natural resources will always remain of prime importance for Alberta, and their quality must be maintained to sustain tourism demand. Because quality control is essential in a business as competitive as the tourism industry, the excellence of Alberta's natural resources must be recognized and protected. Tourism will then be a truly sustainable renewable resource.

The Conservation Strategy project recognizes the value of the natural environment, and this perspective is reflected in this paper. But while the natural environment may be the prime attraction for tourists to Alberta, all elements of the industry are important, and need to be considered.

Chapter Two

Economic and Social Significance of Tourism

Although it is vulnerable to many outside influences, tourism is a resilient and flexible industry. In Alberta, tourism has weathered a world recession and fierce competition to become the province's third largest industry, generating over $2 billion in revenues per annum — about $1,000 for every individual in the province. Tourism revenues amount to 35 percent of our gross provincial product. The industry employs almost 100,000 people — 9 percent of the total Alberta employed work force — in over 5,000 businesses across the province. Those industries most dependent on tourism include: accommodation, transportation, certain retail outlets (souvenirs, luggage, camping, boats, and others), travel trade services, and certain recreation industries (outdoor recreation, sporting events, and so on). Other industries significantly affected by tourism are food and beverage outlets, other retail outlets (for example, gasoline, publishing, photo suppliers), personal services (laundry/cleaners, barbers/beauty salons, parking lots, banks, advertising agencies), and recreation/entertainment and attractions.

Tourism has a unique position in the economy. Although it is often referred to as an industry, it takes in a cross-section of many industries across the entire economy. Tourism revenues and activities depend upon many skill areas, industries, and segments of the population, which are related only through their common goal of providing a consistently enjoyable experience for travellers.

2.1 Economic Benefits

Since tourism generates employment, income, and tax revenues, entrepreneurs and host communities develop and promote tourism in the hope of reaping such economic benefits.

Tourism creates employment opportunities, which broadens the economic base by expanding the service sector. This expansion is an excellent form of diversification, especially for small communities in rural regions that have attempted to attract tourists from the urban-industrial (Edmonton and Calgary) market, selling them on "a change of pace." The communities may promote and develop their rural, wilderness, cultural, or historic assets. Travel has been found to create jobs at a faster rate than the overall economy, for example, at twice the rate of the overall economy in the United States during the two decades prior to 1984 (McIntosh 1984). Such capability is important today, since creating jobs is a high economic priority. Many jobs in the tourism industry are at an unskilled level. While this often means that the payment is low, it also means that those with few opportunities, such as minorities, women, and youth, have another source of employment. However, while unskilled jobs are common, they are by no means characteristic of the entire tourism industry.

Secondary expenditures are inherent in present-day tourism. For example, tourists who purchase a two-week package vacation will spend as much again on purchases (including drink and services). In addition, varied and highly expensive equipment may also be used in certain leisure pursuits; for example, sports may require guns, sail boats, skis, fishing equipment, or yachts, together with the specialized clothing for the sport; or they may require the purchase and rental of an enormous range of tents, recreational vehicles, and camping equipment. Also, new affluence may be expressed through some kinds of

tourism, such as buying and travelling to weekend cottages.

There is a further direct benefit for the Province or municipalities in the form of taxes paid by tourists, which may be generated from property and real estate, sales, business, and licenses. All residents of a community benefit either directly or indirectly when the community's tax base is broadened.

A principal economic advantage of tourism is that it allows a community to earn a new or "basic" income from other parts of the province, country, or globe, and these injections into the economy are the equivalent of export earnings (Murphy 1985). However, the degree to which a local area is able to retain tourism income depends on its level of self-sufficiency and therefore on minimizing leakages (that is, the re-spending that leaves the region). Tourism also redistributes income throughout the province.

In 1984, although Albertans accounted for almost two thirds of visitors, non-residents made over half (52 percent or $1.1 billion) of all tourism expenditures.

Table 2. Visitors and Tourism Expenditures in Alberta

Visitor Origin	Proportion of Total Visitors to Alberta (%)	Proportion of Total Visitor Expenditures (%)
Alberta	62	48
Other Canada	30	37
United States	6	11
Overseas	2	4

Source: Alberta 1985

Tourism's contribution can increase as the extra income passes through the economy. This is called the multiplier effect. Using a Tourism Canada model that considers direct and indirect spending, the $2 billion of direct tourism revenues generated an additional $600 million to produce a total impact of $2.6 billion on the Alberta economy (Alberta 1985).

The indirect economic advantages of the multiplier effects of tourism are related, but not limited, to income. The more an area is able to produce the goods and services the tourism industry needs, the greater will be the multiplier effect; the more these are imported from outside, the smaller the multiplier will be. Most national multipliers are relatively large, because the economy is generally more self-sufficient. This is less true at a provincial or regional scale. Tourism multipliers can vary from about 0.32 to 2.7 for varying types and scales of economy (Murphy 1985).

An example of the multiplier effect is that when a visitor spends $10 in a restuarant, the restuarant uses that money to pay staff and buy food and supplies. In addition, the staff may spend money at the grocery, drug store, and the dry cleaners, while the owner may buy new equipment (see Figure 2).

Other multipliers are related to employment, where increased spending necessitates more jobs; transactions, where money changes hands a number of times per year; and capital, where as business grows, more infrastructure (and superstructure) are constructed (McIntosh 1984). In Alberta, every $1 million in tourist expenditures (based on 1980 dollars) supports 50 full-time jobs, 34.5 direct and 15.5 indirect (Alberta 1985).

An additional economic advantage is that benefits are widely distributed, since a large number of very small businesses support and are ancillary to the industry. This diversity allows the receipts from tourism to quickly filter down to an extremely broad cross section of the population, so the entire community can share in the economic benefits (McIntosh 1984).

2.2 Economic Disadvantages

Tourism may also have negative economic effects. These could include inflationary pressures (for example, rising land prices or cost-of-living increases), dependence on tourism (for example, where off-season periods result in unemployment problems), or changes in investment priorities (when an overly optimistic view of tourism is

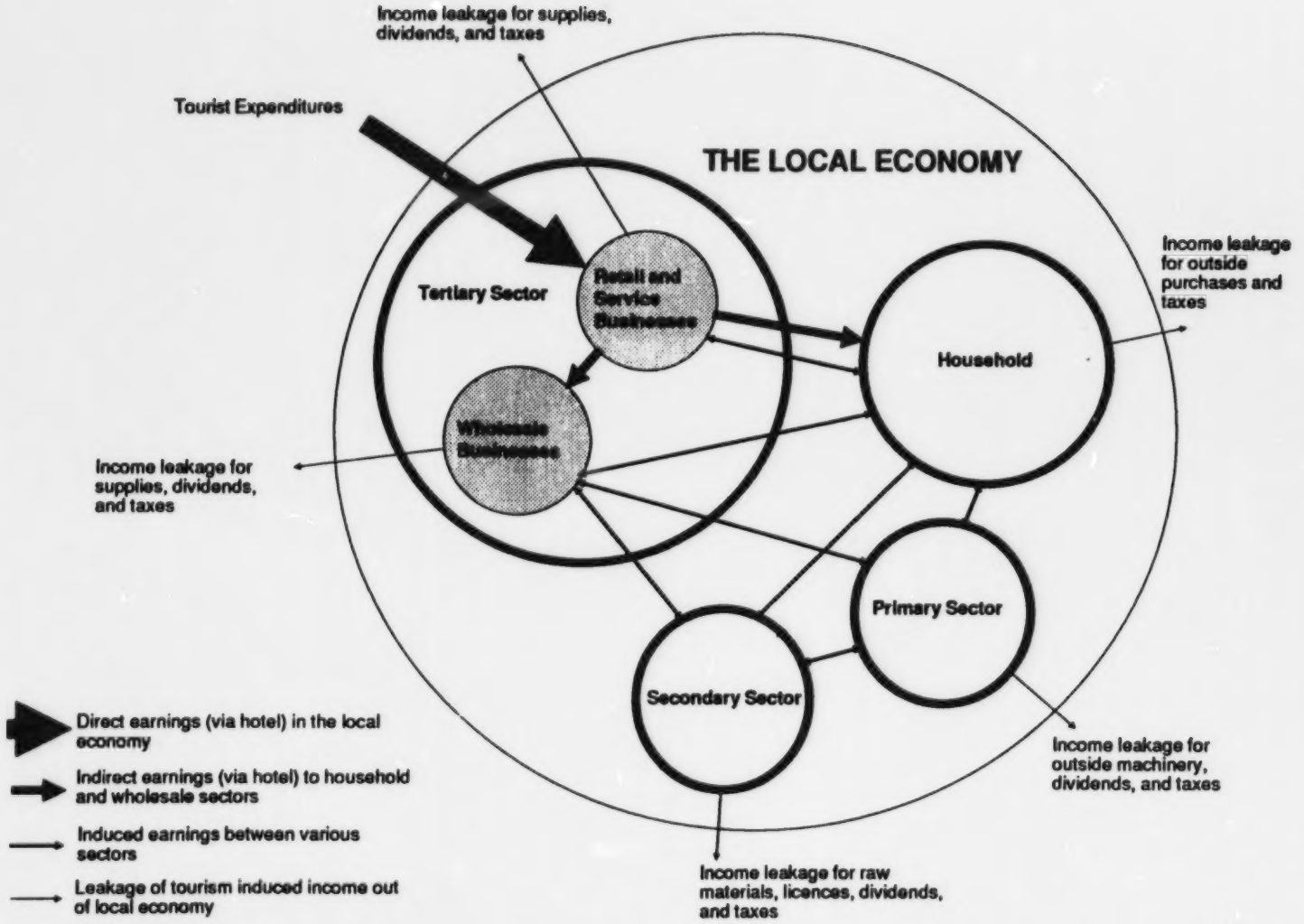

Income leakage for supplies, dividends, and taxes
Tourist Expenditures
THE LOCAL ECONOMY
Tertiary Sector
Retail and Service Businesses
Wholesale Businesses
Household
Income leakage for outside purchases and taxes
Income leakage for supplies, dividends, and taxes
Primary Sector
Secondary Sector
Income leakage for outside machinery, dividends, and taxes
Income leakage for raw materials, licences, dividends, and taxes
Direct earnings (via hotel) in the local economy
Indirect earnings (via hotel) to household and wholesale sectors
Induced earnings between various sectors
Leakage of tourism induced income out of local economy

Figure 2. Economic Impact of Tourist Spending on an Economy

Source: Kreutzwiser 1973

taken, for example, if funds are channelled into tourism at the expense of other priorities such as health, education, or other social services).

In the area of employment, many tourism jobs require little training and skill, and workers are often female or minorities, and are paid at the minimum wage. If particular skills are needed, for example, in administration in the hotel sector, outside expertise may well be preferred to on-the-job training for locals. Similarly, tourism promotion requires market analysis and advertising expertise, skills usually found outside host regions; thus, there is a dependency on outside business expertise. (However, the recent Alberta government initiative to facilitate tourism planning by communities goes a considerable way toward lessening this dependency). In the worst cases, tourism employment may involve high staff turnover, be short-term, and have limited possibilities of advancement for individuals.

Another disadvantage is that an overabundant supply of tourism resources may lead to extreme competition between established destinations, with the subsequent establishment of loss leaders, that is, offering a tourism product below cost to attract customers. To avoid such predatory practices, each region should offer a different product or mixture, in order to complement the tourism products of different regions and accommodate a greater range of tourists' needs.

It must also be understood that a number of economic "faults" of tourism may be due to unrealistic expectations, rather than fundamental problems within the industry itself.

2.3 Social Benefits

Tourism is not only a factor in economic development; it is a factor in social development. In certain areas, Quebec or Europe for instance, a concept called "social tourism" is recognized, which suggests there should be access to leisure and recreation for all (Moulin 1983).

The concept of social (or subsidized) tourism involves three components: that the participants have limited means; that there is a subsidy by states, local authorities, employers, co-operatives, trade unions, clubs, or associations; and that there is travel outside the normal place of residence (McIntosh 1984; Ripa Di Meana 1986). This concept exists to a limited degree in Alberta; for example, William Watson Lodge in Kananaskis Country is primarily for the disabled and for senior citizens, and organizations such as the Canadian Mental Health Association also run holiday camps for handicapped individuals (for example, Camp He Ho Ha [Health, Hope and Happiness] outside Edmonton).

There are social impacts on both the visitor and the host community. Due to the pervasive nature of the tourism industry, social advantages to a region or host community are closely tied to economic, environmental, and other benefits. They relate to jobs and income, improved well-being, the clean and renewable nature of many tourist resources, the strengthening of local cultural identities, the preservation of customs or festivals, and the establishing of new contacts and widening points of view. The social significance of tourism may be seen in increased participation rates in sports, cultural activities, outdoor recreation, historical awareness, extracurricular education, and festivals or special events.

Travel experiences also benefit travellers of all types. It may leave them rested, with expanded knowledge, with outstanding memories, or with new friends. The visitors are often influenced by contrasts in culture and landscape, and may develop an increased appreciation for the qualities of the region visited.

2.4 Social Disadvantages

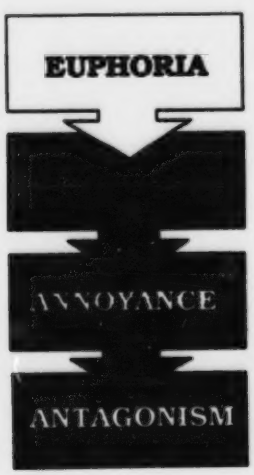
The social disadvantages to an area may include socially disruptive influences, and stress or conflict between hosts and guests. The scale of the industry in the province or area, and the rate of development, often determine the degree of impact. Impacts may include congestion; preferential treatment of tourism-related endeavors by councils; inflated property values and higher taxes; litter, vandalism, pollution, and higher petty crime rates; loss of privacy and change in lifestyle; a disproportionate number of workers in low-paid menial jobs; the possibility of loss of authenticity and cultural integrity through

pseudo-events designed to attract tourists, or "trinketization" of arts and crafts; loss of culture through growing standardization in accommodation, services, and language; and resentment of an invasion of "rich" people with different cultures and values into local communities. It should be understood, however, that sometimes tourism is not the prime cause of change, but just the most visible symptom.

These effects would be most marked in popular tourist destinations, where the scale of the industry was greater, or where the pace of change was too great, or where the numbers of tourists were disproportionate to the numbers of residents. For example, in Queen Charlotte City, the local residents lobbied successfully *against* expanded ferry links with mainland B.C., because of the fears of traffic congestion, higher prices, and other infrastructure pressures. Island residents, including Haida Indian bands, were concerned about the impact of tourists upon their lifestyles and fragile environments. In addition, tourists photographed sites of spiritual significance without permission (D'Amore 1983). At Niagara-on-the-Lake, local residents not only complain about the numbers of tourists (over 1 million per year), the congestion, traffic fumes, dust, and lack of parking, but they shake their fists at them and fling gravel at the tour buses! (*Edmonton Journal* 1987a). Similarly, in Prince Edward Island, there is concern that commercialism is out of control around Cavendish, fabled home of Anne of Green Gables. The village has a population of 156, yet the area has bars, amusement parks, wax museums, castles, shopping marts, concession stands, and a plethora of roadside signs. The Tourism Industry Association of Prince Edward Island recognizes the need for the area to have control of its development: "there has to be a thoughtful planning about where [Cavendish area tourism] is going and the quality of [the tourism] product has to be important" (*Edmonton Journal* 1987b).

Actual conflicts might also arise over pressures on local resources (for example, where there may be perceptions or actual dangers of overharvesting of fish and wildlife by both tourists and locals), or local recreation sites, lakes, or campsites (for example, where locals may be forced to go to nearby campsites on Thursdays to claim a site for the weekend).

The concept of a "saturation level" for tourism was forcibly expressed by Young (1973), who claimed that if this saturation level is exceeded, the costs of tourism outweigh the



Initial phase of development, visitors and investors welcome, little planning or control mechanism

Visitors taken for granted, contacts between residents and outsiders more formal (commercial), planning concerned mostly with marketing

Saturation points approached, residents have misgivings about tourist industry, policy makers attempt solutions via increasing infrastructure rather than limiting growth

Irritations openly expressed, visitors seen as cause of all problems, planning now remedial but promotion increased to offset deteriorating reputation of destination

Figure 3. Causation Theory of Visitor — Resident Irritants

Source: Doxey 1975

benefits. Saturation is expressed in four ways: diversion of land to tourist uses, adverse effect of the industry on the local employment source, pressures on the urban infrastructure, and a psychological saturation level among local residents caused by a combination of the preceding factors. This concept of psychological saturation has been explored and termed "social carrying capacity" by D'Amore (1983). Similarly, Long and Richardson (1988) note that urban residents reach an apparent saturation point for tourism above a certain level of development, supporting the proposition that there may be a community carrying capacity for tourism (Cooke 1982; Allen, Long, and Perdue 1987). A problem with this concept is that the perception of saturation may vary between residents. In addition, the concept also applies to tourists' perceptions (for example, the degree of beach crowding they are willing to tolerate).

2.5 Overall Economic and Social Impact

It is evident from the preceding sections that there can be social costs as well as benefits, and these should be carefully considered before development. McIntosh (1984) advises that governments should try to optimize, not to maximize, the benefits of tourism, and should be mindful of possible costs, which are likely to be higher in less developed regions where the local economies are less able to absorb these costs.

Some tourism developments have a recognized economic cost, such as the cost of developing local resources or catering to visitors through infrastructure (for example, campsites) and through promotion. However, these developments may also be argued as providing direct benefits to local residents. For instance, it may be that the revenues resulting from the additional tourist visits are used to justify and, indeed, to help fund such local amenities as recreation complexes, cultural facilities, museums, or festivals and other attractions.

A number of the negative economic and social effects, however, may be reduced or eliminated by sensitive planning and management, which involves:

- educating residents about the socio-economic significance of tourism, and its advantages and potential disadvantages
- discussions of community problems and priorities preceding development, for example, local growth problems such as congestion need to be tackled before tourism increases
- an overall development of goals and priorities identified and endorsed by residents, including agreement on the scale and rate of development
- involvement of the private sector, communities, and the provincial and possibly federal governments, and greater co-ordination and communication between and within these bodies
- the encouragement of locally based capital, labor, and entrepreneurial ability, leading to more local small-scaled projects and greater local control
- broad, community-based participation in tourism events and activities
- theming and special events that reflect the history and local lifestyles or geographic setting of the region, that is, development of attractions intrinsic to the regional resources. These should contribute as much to the residents as to the visitors
- standards of quality in land use zoning, building codes, policy development, and in marketing arts and crafts.

Reducing the negative effects of tourism helps ensure that the economic and social benefits of tourism can be optimized and sustained.

Chapter Three

Demand Projections

There is a relationship between market price for any product or service, and quantity demanded by the market: pricing affects demand. However, since it is a critical concept for sustained use, carrying capacity is an important consideration when measuring and forecasting demand. The types of data of interest include number of visitors, means of transportation, length of stay, type of accommodation, and amount of expenditures. Those factors influencing tourism demand are outlined below.

3.1 Leisure Time

Since tourism involves travel, it often requires greater blocks of discretionary time than other recreation activities. Tourism depends on leisure time (McIntosh 1984). Leisure time is generally available after work each day, at weekends, and during vacations. Tourism opportunities are usually only available at weekends and vacation periods. (However, the *desire* to travel to a certain destination may be generated during weekday leisure periods.)

Although job retraining or additional education may make new demands on time, available discretionary time has increased due to shortened working hours. The average work week contracted from 53.2 hours per week in 1900, through 40.5 in 1960, to 36.1 in 1975 (Hudman 1980). Also, flexible working hours, more paid holidays, and longer vacations have increased opportunities to travel. When weekends, holidays, and vacations are added, close to one-third of the year is available for leisure time.

Other factors that have been predicted to provide increased leisure time include continued reduction of the work week (although it is becoming more difficult to obtain this), government movement of official holidays into a weekend to increase travel opportunities, increasing unemployment, and decreasing retirement age (McIntosh 1984; Hudman 1980).

3.2 Socio-demographic Factors

Age

The 1982 Alberta Non-Resident Travel Survey showed the following profile of visitors.

Table 3. Age of Visitors to Alberta

Age	Percent
0-9	10
10-19	10
20-34	27
35-49	20
50-64	21
65+	11

Source: Travel Alberta and Alberta Tourism and Small Business 1982.

Young adults constitute an important visiting group. The same survey showed that families constituted almost half (43 percent) of the total number of visitors. However, it should be noted that trends visible in the young adult group are to have later marriages, to delay having the first child, and to have fewer children. The importance of the older group (aged 35 to 49) is that they are in their peak earning years, and this group will increase over the next decade. In addition, hous-

ing mortgage obligations may have shrunk proportionate to increased income. Thus an increased amount may be spent on discretionary activities such as travel.

Senior citizens have tended to be overlooked as a group. However, their numbers are growing proportionate to the total population, and they are becoming more significant. Travel by those aged 65 and over increased 50 percent between 1972 and 1977. Although physically this group may be considered to be the least mobile of adults, their level of health is improving, their life expectancy is increasing, they are remaining physically and mentally active longer, and many seniors have the money and desire to travel if facilities are available for them and are properly promoted. By the turn of the century, this group is expected to be more independent, politically active, and influential than before. This is also a group with large amounts of discretionary time for travel, which may increase if early retirement continues. The over-65 age group is predicted to increase at twice the current growth rate as life span increases (Van Doren 1984).

Since the world population is aging, the industry will be required to provide opportunities for this group. For example, a growing trend in North America is elder hosteling, where older visitors stay at university or college residences during vacations and take non-credit courses. They have the right to use the recreation and other facilities for the duration of their course.

Other important aspects are the fact that seniors are the major sector in the group travel market, they take longer vacations and fill weekend and off-season periods, they use on-site food and beverage facilities, and spend a greater amount than average on their vacations. The travel industry is increasingly catering to seniors through discount programs and travel clubs and packages.

Income and Wealth

In the 1900s there has been a very sharp increase in both real and disposable incomes, particularly over the past three decades. Contributing factors are smaller family sizes, the increase in women in the labor force, and the increase in paid vacations. In general, as income increases, there is an increase in travel (Hudman 1980). The trend for both spouses to work is expected to continue to increase, leading to the ability to take more trips and to an increase in air travel.

Sex

The 1982 survey shows that visitors to Alberta are approximately 54 percent male and 46 percent female. However, women are increasing in the labor force and are increasingly rising to positions of power, influence, and economic independence. They are also increasingly influencing family travel decisions (McIntosh 1984).

Occupation-Education

Many factors that determine tourism demand are closely interrelated, for example, occupation, education, and income. Education tends to broaden people's interests and thus to stimulate travel. Education often accompanies higher incomes, and those with more education tend to become part of the managerial, technical, and professional groups. These groups tend to travel most, whether for business or other reasons. Also, the distinctions between work and leisure are blurring, and there is increasing interest in activities that allow active participation, self-fulfillment, and self-improvement or education.

3.3 Nature of Demand

Vacations are still considered a major part of North American life, and travel growth is expected to increase (Table 4). One of the outcomes of more holidays and shorter work weeks is the tendency to weekend travel (mini-vacations). McIntosh (1984) predicts that, because shorter travel and more numerous excursions are generally more relaxing than infrequent long trips, weekend trips will continue to dominate travel and recreation patterns in North America. The two-income family that finds it difficult to co-ordinate their holiday schedules probably also contributes to this trend. Thus local and regional destinations could play an increasingly important role. The markets for these will be primarily Albertans, as well as visitors from British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and

Table 4. Travel Industry Growth Trend Factors, 1929-2029

		1929	1949	1969	Present 1979	Approx.* Growth	1989	2009	2029
Population (Billions)	W	2.0	2.5	3.6	4.3	(2.0)	5.3	7.0	8.2
	US	.12	.15	.20	.22	(0.9)	.24	.28	.32
Gross product (Trillions of 1979 dollars)	W	1.6	2.5	6.2	9.5	(5.0)	15	30	50
	US	.5	.8	1.7	2.3	(3.2)	3.2	6	10
Discretionary purchasing power (Trillions of 1979 dollars)	W	.2	.4	.9	1.4	(4.6)	2.2	5.5	20
	US	.10	.24	.51	.70	(3.4)	1.0	2.1	4
Hotel rooms (Millions)	W	4.2	3.5	5.4	8.0	(2.8)	9.2	16	27.5
	US	1.43	1.13	1.79	2.03	(1.3)	2.29	3	3.9
Autos (Millions)	W	30	50	130	230	(5.8)	400	700	1000
	US	21	36	87	115	(2.4)	140	180	230
Auto miles (Billions)	W	210	560	1300	2300	(4.3)	3000	4000	5000
	US	150	400	980	1200	(4.3)	1500	2000	2300
Air passenger miles (Trillions)	W	.13	15	220	400	(6.0)	700	2000	7000
	US	.08	6.8	110	180	(5.1)	300	800	2000
Air travel revenues (Billions of 1979 dollars)	W	.2	3	24	47	(6.8)	90	260	800
	US	.1	1.5	12	23	(6.8)	45	120	240
Total intercity passenger miles (Trillions)	W	.7	1.5	4.0	7.0	(4.7)	10	22	40
	US	.26	.5	1.1	1.7	(3.8)	2.3	4.5	8
Total travel revenues (Billions of 1979 dollars)	W	30	70	240	450	(6.2)	800	2000	7000
	US	10	20	80	170	(6.8)	300	800	1400

Notes: W = World US = United States

*Approximate annual average growth rate in percent for the period 1969-79.

Source: Murphy 1985.

neighboring states. One of the consequences of the shorter time periods for travel is that tourists are becoming more discriminating and desirous of high-quality opportunities at destinations that offer value for money and a variety of activities.

A range of opportunities is being sought by tourists, and the more sophisticated tourist requires sophisticated programs and services as well as high-quality facilities. In addition, improved education levels, together with the emphasis on self-fulfillment, have led to increasing demand for environmental appreciation and interpretation experiences.

Alberta's largest non-resident tourism markets are other Canadians and the United States. Tourism in Canada used to be synonymous with auto touring, but now the market is highly segmented, and tourists demand a range of experiences, from sports, special events, or theme tours to wilderness adventures. Despite market fragmentation, a recent federal study of the United States pleasure travel market indicates that Canada's greatest tourism strength is as a destination for private vehicle touring (Tourism Canada 1985). The presence of this touring market predicts a major type of demand for Alberta's tourism products, which are well suited to touring trips.

An advantage of the touring trip is that it increases the visitors' length of stay. Also, a variety of tourism attractions interest visitors who, because they have their own vehicles, can travel where and when they please. Indeed, the touring trip has no single focus of interest. This type of travel experience is more than the transportation; it includes the attractions, the food, and the accommodation. In this respect, Alberta is able to cater to touring demands relatively well. It has a number of major attractions, varied services, and interesting circle tours. However, since Alberta's natural resources remain the prime attractions for touring visitors, other attractions should be developed and publicized, so that the carrying capacity of popular environments is not exceeded.

3.4 Other Factors

Flows of visitors represent the effects of many different factors, some of which may not be easily predicted, for example, economic conditions and exchange rates of different countries. There has been a recent slowdown in tourism growth, which seems to have been caused by the recession of the early 1980s and other causes (Taylor 1983a). However, leisure industries in general have shown the ability to withstand economic downturns and to recover rapidly when business conditions improve, and thus "forecasters are relatively optimistic about the future growth prospects for international travel" (Taylor 1983b:49).

Specific developments in Alberta will generate increased tourism. These include the creation of Kananaskis Country and the 1988 Winter Olympics, as well as increasing interest in downhill skiing. The Olympics have already had impact in an increased awareness of Alberta and its tourist opportunities. Eidsvik (1983) predicts continued strong growth of Banff and Jasper as winter tourism destinations. The mountain parks are likely to continue to attract most visitors, in part because of the current underdevelopment of the provincial park system, which lacks a good range of services and programs in selected areas with tourist potential.

Society is placing increasing importance on recreation and tourism as a right, as a means of self-fulfillment, and as a means of reducing the stress of work. Ironically, stressful conditions may occur because of the pace of growth and congestion in popular destinations (Murphy 1985), while Kahn (1979) predicts a shortage of space at desirable destinations due to demand growing faster than tourism destinations.

Demand is likely to increase for package travel, special interest tourism products, mini-vacations, environmental preservation and appreciation experiences, summer auto touring, challenging adventure-oriented activities, cultural-historical interpretation facilities, and destinations with varied opportunities as well as "upscale" or full-service locations.

When all factors are considered, it is apparent that the demand for tourism opportunities will increase well into the twenty-first century.

Chapter Four

Achieving Sustainable Use

4.1 Environmental Degradation

Many people fail to grasp the number of ecological impacts made by tourists (Nicholson 1972). They can include litter, souvenir collecting (for example, removing stalactites or stalagmites from caves), fires, erosion, resource degradation, traffic congestion, graffiti, noise, developmental pressures due to inadequate facilities/services for locals and visitors, and others. However, Pearce (1982) indicates that sometimes tourism and tourists are unfairly blamed for other development or habitat pressures on the ecosystem.

Some change is expected to be necessary to accommodate mass tourism, where the scale of visitation is great. However, location and concentration of development must be carefully controlled to reduce negative impact on the host area and preserve a pleasant environment for the tourist and the local resident. In Australia, there is concern that the expected boom in tourism during their bicentenary may ruin the very countryside the tourists come to photograph and explore. Even before a major resort was opened at Port Douglas, near the Great Barrier Reef, trails through the fragile Daintree rain forest were being chewed up and widened by a steady stream of buses and four-wheel-drive vehicles, resulting in soil erosion and a degradation of the rain forest. "Environmentalists agree most developments are not eyesores, but they say that in the rush to build, some developers are in danger of ruining the environment that drew them in the first place" (*The Vancouver Province* 1988:T8).

The environment may be degraded when tourism developments are extrinsic, or alien to that environment, for example, the plan to build a monorail from Ayers Rock to the remote Olga Mountains in Australia, or plans to build a waterslide just outside Waterton National Park. The term "tourist paradise" usually does not describe the preservation of an attractive natural environment, but the vulgar transformation of the environment or even damage to it (Cohen 1980). While some market segments may be attracted to these developments, they detract from the attractive intrinsic qualities of that environment. An example is the inappropriate location of the numerous theme parks and attractions lining the Okanagan Valley and other beautiful tourist routes in British Columbia. However, it is possible to successfully cater to mass tourism while conserving and developing an appreciation for intrinsic environmental values, as at Walt Disney World with its adjacent conservation area.

In some areas, notably the mountain parks, tourism today is often little more than an extension of the city and its lifestyle transposed onto a scenic background, with traffic jams, line-ups, supermarkets, taverns, fashion shops, night life, prepared environments, and the unending drone of motors (Sax 1980). Between 1950 and 1985, visits to Canadian national parks have increased ten-fold. Banff, for instance, has the record for visits in Canada, at 3.3 million in 1987. This is partly due to its location on the Trans-Canada Highway and its proximity to Calgary, which regards Banff as its logical recreation area. Banff is now a four-season park and winter use, which is already high, is expected to increase because of the publicity resulting from the 1988 Winter Olympics.

While four-season tourism is a desirable objective for most destinations because of associated benefits (such as spread of impact and

constant employment demand), it is possible to see the detrimental effects of increasing use or overuse in certain key locations. Detrimental effects indicate the need for better planning.

In the past, two opposite positions have held sway with respect to the impact of the tourism industry: (1) that it is a clean industry which at best does not lead to the destruction of natural resources, and which brings economic benefits without spoiling the environment, or (2) that it has negative and detrimental environmental effects which at worst cause irreversible damage, and that it has an expanding, cancer-like quality, invasive of outlying and unspoilt areas.

Neither of these views is appropriate, although examples of each may be found. Environmental impact cannot be generalized. A number of factors should be assessed to determine impact (Cohen 1980). These factors are related to the scale and rate of development, as mentioned earlier, and include:

Intensity of tourist site use and development

Numbers of visitors, their length of stay, and the activities and facilities available determine the intensity of tourist site use and the associated developments. If tourists are dispersed in small numbers over a wide area, usually there is minimal infrastructure and minimal impact. Large numbers in small areas usually cause damage. Considerable development in popular tourist regions can promote inflated land prices, intensive utilization, commercial entertainment, intensive urbanization, and corridor tourist development. Banff is a prime example of this transformation.

Resiliency of the ecosystem

Not all environments can withstand visitation equally well. Large cities can better withstand large numbers than can the open countryside or natural areas. However, cities also may be impacted negatively in terms of quality of life, land booms, and building types. The serious destruction occurs when a boom or influx of tourists takes place in the absence of proper or adequate planning. Unfortunately, some special environments may have considerable attraction for tourists, but may have very delicate ecologies, for example, alpine and sub-alpine areas, caves, small rivers and lakes, archaeological sites, wildlife habitat, sand dunes, fossil beds, and others. These resources are in most danger of being destroyed — ironically, the very attractions the visitors come to see.

Time perspective of the tourism developer

It is assumed by idealistic tourism industry representatives and others that tourist entrepreneurs recognize the foolishness of destroying the very resource that is the main attraction for visitors, and that development will only occur after site impact assessments (Nish 1987). It is assumed that the self-restraint of the entrepreneurs will prevent exploitation, overuse, and environmental degradation. However, developers may be:

- unaware of the environmental impact of their activity
- unable to appreciate the cumulative environmental implications and consequences of their small development
- unwilling to take remedial action because of short-term profit or competition motives, that is, the "fast buck" motive.

The way tourist development transforms the character of an area

The character of an area changes with construction of contrived or artificial attractions. This change may not be negative. While West Edmonton Mall may not be an attractive destination for all tourists, its location within a metropolitan center is appropriate. Putting West Edmonton Mall attractions such as waterslides in a spectacular natural landscape is inappropriate, since they are extrinsic to the fundamental resource — the landscape.

It is probably impossible to use a natural landscape for intensive tourism without any transformation. Detrimental change is most likely when intensive, large-scale development occurs in delicate environments that are attractive to the modern tourist. However, patterns of visitor use are more important biologically than is number of people (Carothers and Aitchison 1976; Shelby

1979). Well-managed and directed activities have less impact than random and uncontrolled activities. In the mountain parks, for example, random hiking to such noted viewpoints as Peyto Lake has damaged vegetation and soil. But recent educational signage, and the development of paths and sites hardened to withstand considerable use, have contained and reduced this damage.

4.2 Sustaining the Natural Environment

Much public land in Alberta is equated with wilderness. In fact, numerous "natural" areas provide recreational and tourism opportunities which, because of their small size or the extent of human modification, are not wilderness. The Australian Conservation Foundation defines an area of wilderness as a "large tract of primitive country with its land and waters substantially unmodified by humans and their works." It is helpful to the cause of conservation to make this distinction between wilderness and natural areas.

Diversity and variety in the environment is valuable to society. The word "valuable" has many connotations, including the aesthetic, economic, and scientific. Aesthetic quality is often a major factor in the drive to protect an area, possibly because of our strong feelings about the perceived aesthetics of wilderness, based on characteristics such as primitiveness, remoteness, and natural features of human interest. Scientific and economic values center around the diversity of the gene pool and its maintenance for future study. There is some overlap between the economic and aesthetic factors with respect to tourism.

Alberta's natural landscapes, particularly the Rocky Mountains, have long been a major tourist attraction. It is difficult, then, to agree with Murphy that "only a limited number of tourists are specifically interested in the environment, whether that be its natural or cultural attributes" (Murphy 1986:118). However, active use of these landscapes is not important to all tourists. There is a spectrum of "use" of the natural environment. Rarely do more than 10 percent of all tourists engage in such activities as backcountry camping, hiking, or hunting (Syrnyk 1986; Marsh 1986; McMullan 1986). Many are content to simply view what they perceive to be "wilderness" from the window of a tour bus or family automobile. However, they visit because of the wildlands; that is, the wilderness image or natural splendor is essential to the vicarious experience of these more passive visitors. They also know that they have the opportunity to experience it more directly if they wish.

The small numbers of direct users belie their significant economic contribution. For example, Boxall (1986) identifies the disproportionately large contribution that non-resident hunters and fishermen make to the provincial economy. Thus the importance of wilderness or the natural environment to gross receipts from tourism is greater than tourist numbers alone would suggest.

Sometimes the natural environment is a supplementary attraction. Although the main destination activity of most tourists might be to visit friends or relatives, or to go shopping, the natural environment is a part of the total tourist "package" that increases Alberta's attractiveness as a tourist destination. The economic value of the enhanced image provided by high-quality natural environments is probably large, and may exceed the economic contributions of direct users of the natural environment.

Some insights into tourism's environmental needs may be available from the study of ecology. One insight is that large areas of natural environment probably should be set aside for the future, even if the quantities exceed those presently required to meet tourism needs. Thus tourism development could be sustained to make an increasing contribution to the Alberta economy. From an ecological perspective, the land base dedicated for tourism development or facilities should be a small fraction of that dedicated to natural lands or wilderness, so that the severe consequences of exceeding the environment's carrying capacity are avoided. We should be equally concerned about preserving historical, cultural, or other resources from which tourism benefits.

There is concern that "sustained development is as meaningless a concept as multiple use" and that

> *In our rush to endorse the concept and make all our development sustained, we should not forget that just as with multiple use, the preservation of large tracts of pristine ecosystems is an integral part of such a concept* (Dearden 1987).

The tourism industry is expanding rapidly in terms of visitor volumes and number of developments, but the industry must be careful to operate within constraints imposed by the natural environment and other systems of which it is a part. The rate and nature of change must not exceed environmental capabilities.

The diversity within the tourism industry means that there is little co-ordination with respect to development conflicts. But the aggregate impact of individual decisions in the industry can be great. The tourism industry probably could benefit from a clearer understanding of tourists' attraction to the environment. Better decisions could then be made about tourism's land use needs, taking into account economic and other priorities of the province, and the responsibilities of other government departments to manage the land base.

A co-operative relationship between tourism and conservationists is possible and highly desirable. This kind of relationship is enhanced when both natural environmental and social carrying capacities are recognized and built into development plans. The tourism industry depends on a clean, attractive resource base to ensure its existence (Ritchie 1986). A healthy resource base is also one of the goals of conservationists.

The rising costs of and intense competition for land and its resources also mean that governments and citizens concerned about conservation need a partner with similar conservation goals who can compete within the business world and protect these natural areas from overuse (Murphy 1986; Brooks 1982; Nish 1987) or destructive use. Though tourism disturbs the environment, tourism and conservation interests can benefit by working with each other, provided the working relationship is co-operative.

4.3 Sustaining the Cultural Environment

In tourism terms, there can be great benefit in restoring cultural buildings, blocks, ghettos, or even entire areas, as in towns and cities of all sizes in the United States, or York in Great Britain, or in innumerable other places in Europe. Millions of tourists are attracted to these places, which benefit by tourist expenditures. In addition, because of enhanced amenity values, mobile businesses (finance, communications, high technology, research) can be attracted to locate.

Historic sites are a valuable resource of intrinsic worth and tremendous tourism potential. Expenditures related to historic and cultural sites account for about 29 percent of all tourist expenditures in Canada as a whole, and even more in western Canada. Benefits of renovation are well documented by Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism (n.d.) and the United States Department of the Interior (Bever 1978).

Renovated historic buildings are attractive to the public, and can be extremely successful in their new role, as well as being attractive to tourists. In addition:

- The costs of renovating historic buildings are often significantly less than building anew, yet restoration is more labor intensive than new construction projects (provides jobs).
- Renovation can be a training ground for a community's unemployed (as in Brooklyn's neighborhood rehabilitation program).
- A small amount of investment in historic preservation programs strongly stimulates private sector investment in restoration work.
- Rehabilitation has been an effective tool in revitalizing urban areas, as in the Main Street Canada Program (Lazear 1987).
- Rehabilitation is resource efficient (it consumes less energy than new construction, and uses fewer natural resources) (Bever 1978).

1975 was designated European Architectural Heritage Year. The objectives of the "Year" were

> *...to alert the European peoples to the nature of their common heritage and to the nature of the threats to that heritage, to protect ancient buildings and to find for them a living role in society, and to conserve the character of old towns and villages* (Middleton 1976:25).

Countries varied in their criteria, approaches, and action programs. But out of them emerged a European concept of "integrated conservation," that is, conservation of the architectural heritage "not as a series of isolated museum pieces but as part of the wider urban fabric, as part of the fabric of society" (Middleton 1976:26). This was enshrined in the Declaration of Amsterdam.

This Declaration recognizes that heritage conservation must be considered not as a marginal issue, but as a major objective of urban and rural planning, for all levels of government. It requires that legislative and administrative measures be strengthened and made more effective and suggests that various levels of government should financially assist the restoration of buildings or areas.

Architectural preservation, urban interpretation, urban museums, historic site interpretation, and designation of cultural regions are interrelated. All are attractive to tourists, and growing interest in cultural tourism may begin to support these initiatives. Interpretation and presentation of the heritage resource should be part of the preservation process (Jamieson 1987).

The chairman of the Board of Governors of Heritage Canada states "we have possibly the weakest heritage legislation in the Western world" (Wood 1985:22). By comparison with other places such as the United States and Europe, we fail in supporting heritage conservation through programs, legislation, or financing. For example, in the United States there are laws and programs to help preserve meritorious structures. But in Alberta there are few mechanisms with "teeth" for heritage protection.

Historical site development comes under the mandate of Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism, but can involve co-operation between Tourism, Culture and Multiculturalism, and Recreation and Parks. Historic sites attract considerable numbers of visitors each year. However, because of funding restrictions, even the provincial inventory process, a first step in historic site conservation, is not complete. In 1985, Edmonton was the only major western Canadian city with no heritage inventory (Wood 1985). Now it has an inventory, but it has not been given status or priority.

The second requirement is to increase the public's awareness of the intrinsic and potential value of these structures, and of the scarcity of this resource. However, public calls for preservation do not carry much clout (for example, Edmonton's Tegler Building and Strand Theatre were demolished in the early 1980s despite widespread support for their preservation).

The third requirement is designation as a historic structure. There are approximately 3,000 designated structures in Canada, of which Quebec has approximately half and Alberta has approximately 10 percent. Difficulties related to designation are that property owners who do not wish to have their buildings designated can refuse, or can ask councils for compensation for resultant loss of value if designation was made by a municipality rather than the Province. These provisions have led to lawyers warning city councils not to designate buildings because of possible lawsuits.

It is true that there are special provisions in the provincial code for historic buildings. However, there are difficulties related to zoning problems (for example, where the original historic function of the building is different from current zoning) or the building code (for example, where building design, stair widths, safety requirements, and so on, may not meet current regulations.)

It is necessary, if we are to preserve these meritorious structures, to establish laws or programs to *encourage* and enable preservation. Such encouragement should be through federal

tax incentives, as in the United States. The United States tax incentive scheme for heritage property developments has reported a return of up to 21 to 1 on economic activity generated from each deferred tax dollar (Alberta 1985). There are currently incentives to *destroy* buildings in Canada. Property owners are allowed to write off, as a loss, the entire value of the building they wish to demolish. This law has contributed considerably to razing of buildings and, without federal changes, the province will be able to do very little to improve the situation. However, strong tax incentives implemented recently in British Columbia and Manitoba have helped to preserve historical resources in Victoria and Winnipeg. This contrasts with the situation in Alberta, especially Edmonton, where the City administration itself has been responsible for demolishing a number of buildings. Even the Edmonton Historical Board has no real impact (Wood 1985).

That the government is aware of the benefits of redevelopment of historical resources is seen in the 1985 White Paper, where revisions to provincial legislation dealing with taxation are proposed. What is also encouraging is the grass-roots movement to renovate and conserve, for example, through the Old Strathcona Foundation or the Society for the Protection of Historical Resources in Edmonton (SPARE).

As well as urban structures, buildings located in rural areas can be worth preserving from a tourism perspective, as well as for the sake of local residents' appreciation of their history. Relocation is a form of preservation and may be considered as part of the initial assessment process. Currently, coal leases allow strip mining and the razing of historic structures on the land surface. The problem is that Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism recognizes only an *in situ* structure as a historic site. It is possible that this position may be changing. Regulators should consider requiring industries to relocate historic buildings, or provide access to them, or at least fully document them, before razing. Some industries already undertake these alternatives.

It is being recognized that regional theming attracts tourists to a region. With the increasing popularity of auto touring, a region can draw tourists to its heritage resources and spread tourist impact by incorporating heritage buildings, industries, equipment, and sites into a themed and interpreted tour. With the involvement of various levels of government, industry, associations, and community groups, regions can be developed to provide a significant themed tourism attraction. The private sector can take initiative to participate in the regional experience with appropriate or themed developments and facilities. The challenge for the government is to enable entrepreneurial development through supportive legislation.

4.4 Sustaining the Social Environment

A co-operative relationship with tourism is required within the context of the social environment as well the natural and cultural environments. To attempt to attract ever-increasing numbers into certain social settings may be detrimental to both visitors and local residents. Tourists may have frustrations related to overcrowding and unfulfilled expectations of "getting away from it all." Residents may feel that their lifestyles have been disturbed, and that increased tourism dollars are not worth the disturbance. Recent news articles with headlines such as *Sleepless nights on Shuswap Lake. Residents battle a houseboat armada from Alberta* (*Alberta Report* 1987) describe too much tourism for the carrying capacity of the area. Too little attention has been paid to the integration of tourism into a plan for the host area. Such social disruptions are mirror images of insensitivity to natural environment constraints (whether of rate or of density). Without better integration of tourism with other citizen objectives, tourism is likely to decline and die in such places.

Local residents' frustration with the tourism industry is likely to be particularly keen when the host area is small, or where the residents' tourism-oriented lifestyle differs radically from their previous lifestyle, or when the benefits from the tourism industry are not evenly distributed. A small-scale example may be the localized life-

style disruptions to residents of "Candy Cane Lane" in Edmonton. Homeowners in this stretch of several blocks in a residential neighborhood coordinate an annual display of Christmas lights and decorations. Large hotels have begun to reap the tourism benefits of bus tours of the attraction, but residents suffer the consequent lack of access and street congestion. Even the community satisfaction derived from annual participation may not be enough to sustain this local endeavor in the face of annually increasing visitor impact.

Ensuring a high quality of tourism that fits with the concept of tourism embraced by all persons within the affected area will help to ensure that the industry satisfies both tourist and resident alike, and that the industry remains viable within the destination area (Moser and Moser 1986; Johnson 1986).

4.5 Challenges to Tourism-Environmental Co-operation

With time, rising population pressures, resource depletion, or unemployment could challenge the strength of tourism-environment co-operation. If a tourist-environment partnership is to be preserved in Alberta, the benefits need to be distributed among affected individuals. Individuals and municipalities need to be educated about the benefits of tourism to them, whether benefits are from increased quality and number of local recreation facilities, increased job opportunities, or tourist-generated incomes. This educational process may inform Albertans not only about the positive aspects of tourism, but also about the mutual benefits of conservation-oriented tourism, for the industry, the economy, and for Alberta's environment. Education will pave the way for a sustained development viewpoint, with respect to such facets as curbing spiralling growth and encouraging sustainable resource management. Acknowledging that recreation on Crown land has as much value as other forms of resource use (Shands 1987) would probably assist in the management of our resources on a sustained basis.

As the tourism industry grows, better ways to integrate a broader spectrum of ecological, social, and economic needs will be required if the politico-social will to establish more parks does not materialize. As opportunities to develop parks diminish, we may have to consider the models suggested for countries where the clash between environmental values associated with parks systems and human needs are particularly sharp (Lusigi 1982; Harmon 1987), or where the land base is quite limited, as in Britain. If so, they should complement, not replace, the park system we already have in place.

4.6 New Planning Approaches to Pressure for Land

The future may require that public and private land be integrated into park and open-space systems; or that parks be owned by other than the federal government (as suggested recently by the [Canadian] Task Force on Park Establishment, 1986); or that corridors of recreation lands and water be established to link urban and rural spaces (Shands 1987). One of the problems with assembling parks that include privately owned land is the difficulty of ensuring that private lands are managed in ways that are compatible with both environment and tourism objectives. Edmonton's river valley park is an example of a recreational corridor. However, the interface between jurisdictions still presents problems in the river valley between Devon and Edmonton. We need a diversified park system, and one where the land outside the park system is also considered to offer outdoor recreation opportunities.

New planning approaches will be most required in areas where public land is scarce, or where demands are greatest, for example, in the foothills and in the parkland and prairie ecosystems. We must take a proactive approach to avoid some of the tourism problems other places experience. For example, the Western Australian government is studying proposals to use soldiers to control people visiting the Kimberly region! (*The Vancouver Province* 1988).

Several on-the-ground approaches have been used by park planners to help ensure a sustainable relationship between tourism and the natural environment. A prerequisite is that parks

must be seen as a system, that is, a regularly interacting or independent group of recreation, preservation, and tourism areas constituting a unified whole (Landals 1986). In a systems perspective, no one area can be everything to all people. Park classification, which categorizes parks along a continuum from preservation to intensive tourism/recreation, is the primary means of minimizing conflict. Only activities that are compatible with that classification are allowed. National parks are oriented more toward preservation, and municipal parks more toward intensive, facility-related recreation, although there may be a tremendous variation in type of use within any one park.

Visitors to more facility-oriented recreation areas may not be interested in a wilderness experience, but may be interested in opportunities to see wildlife in natural surroundings. Providing such opportunities by offering viewing of wild and rare species (for example, at interpretive observation points or game farms) may have several benefits: it may maintain higher species levels, deflect tourism pressures from more sensitive environments, and, through education, help visitors to appreciate the need to protect large wilderness areas as well as smaller natural areas. A close relationship can exist between large-scale tourism and preservation of a disappearing landscape and wildlife, as at the bison paddocks near the recreation-oriented facilities in Elk Island National Park. Zoos and game farms can offer a similar tourism-wildlife partnership.

Perhaps the greatest tourism/environment conflict in park plans concerns the degree and type of facility development to be allowed. Recent discussion and argument regarding the expansion of Sunshine Village ski facilities in Banff National Park is an extreme example of the disruption of tourism-environmental co-operation. One solution is to keep new commercial accommodation and multi-attraction resort centers out of reserve-oriented parks and fragile settings, though sufficiently close that reciprocal benefits are possible (Brooks 1982; Seale 1982; Landals 1986). Inaction is a form of management. But if we do not set limits for private operators, they will set their own and the quality of experience will be affected accordingly (Jensen 1979). The recent concept of parks as core areas to be preserved, surrounded by buffer zones that allow certain environment-compatible uses, fits with the concept that resorts should be developed outside parks (Lusigi 1982; Sheard and Blood 1973).

Keeping the environment surrounding these developments attractive, and allowing tourists to be close to the natural resources of parks, should preclude any tendency for tourists to think of themselves as staying in second-rate areas (Butler 1986), and should still offer sufficient investment attractions for developers. Any residual reluctance of tourists to stay in facilities outside the park may be overcome by thoughtful marketing; in their efforts to develop new customers, marketers can influence tourist perceptions and can create tourist expectations that are compatible with park systems. For example, scenery may be merely a backdrop for more urban and resort activities that attract certain tourists (Marsh 1982). On the other hand,

> *the politically popular management theme* preado optimum, *the greatest good, must incorporate definitions of good beyond strikingly large numbers. Thus, every site cannot be everything to everybody* (Becker, Niemann, and Gates 1979:37).

Offering a range of park types means that effective marketing can help the tourist select a destination area appropriate for his or her needs and preferences.

4.7 Planning for Sustainable Tourism

Planning for sustainable tourism requires us to look at trends in the world around us and to identify possible constraints for tourism. The tourism industry must be flexible enough to adapt to changing conditions. Paradoxically, one way to build in sustainability is to adhere to some constraints or limits. Thus for partnerships such as one between tourism and conservationists to be sustained, neither partner must attempt to max-

imize gain at the expense of the other. Optimal blends of the two concerns have to be sought. Such a partnership implicitly recognizes the need to live within limits imposed by the biosphere, and acknowledges the right of both tourists and conservationists to the biosphere's resources. The logic of optimizing rather than maximizing gains is applied in everyday life, where it is called cooperation.

The need for rules and limits applies no less to social constraints than to physical ones. Conflict between the host society and tourists may not be so sharp in more affluent economies such as Alberta's, because the supply of basic resources still exceeds needs. However, recent trends suggest that natural-resource-extractive economies are likely to become relatively less important. If Albertans want a greater tourism presence in their economy, more land should be designated for a range of tourism and environmental conservation purposes in Alberta.

Chapter Five

Interactions Between Resource Users

5.1 Tourism Resources

The resources of the tourism industry are found in any environment and range from purely natural to man-made attractions. While a tourist's interests and emphasis may be more on one resource than the other, Dearden indicates that "rare is the tourist for whom a superabundance of one of these resources will compensate for a complete deficit of the other" (Dearden 1983:78). An appropriate balance can be achieved by forward-looking planning and resource management.

The marketers produce the image that attracts tourists, the result being tourism expenditures and economic well-being. In Alberta, the prime resources are those at the natural end of the spectrum. Our emphasis and expertise, however, tends to be strongest at the end of the spectrum furthest from the basic resource, where human control is greatest (Dearden 1983) (see Figure 4).

5.2 Interactions Between Tourism and Other Resource Users

The ability of the spectrum of resources to sustain tourism varies tremendously. Interactions between tourists and other resource users will be examined within this spectrum, in an attempt to

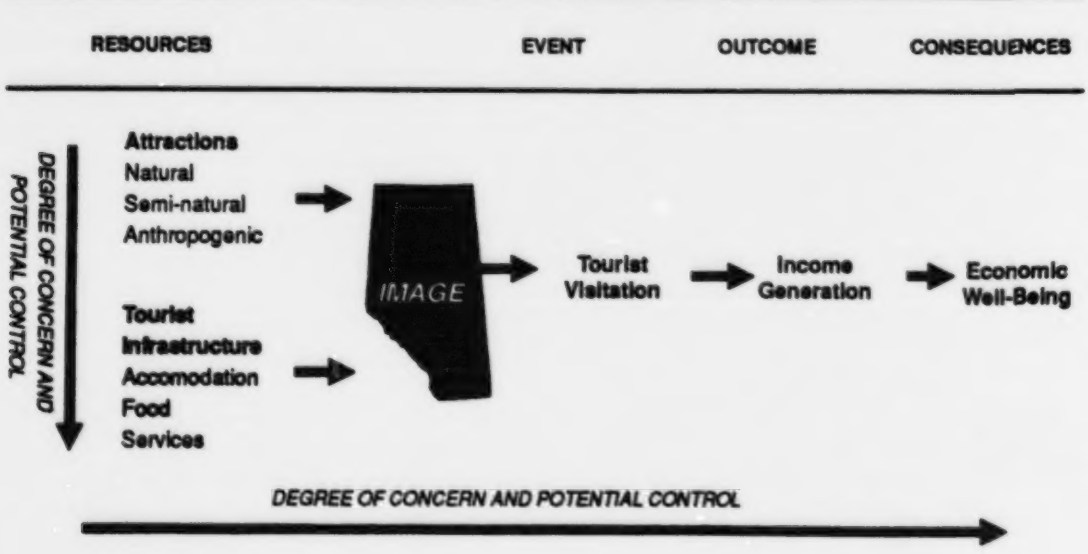


Figure 4. Relationship of Tourist Industry to Resources

Source: Dearden 1983

shed some light on the complexity of the context within which tourism operates.

Tourism interacts with many other sectors in the province's economy. The degree of interaction varies, and may be positive or negative or both, depending on the scale of tourist activity, seasonality, the specific interaction, and potential cumulative effects.

Interactions in the Urban Environment

Cities and smaller urban environments often attract tourists with their diversity of cultural, artistic, and economic activities and facilities. This may be seen in the development of national and international attractions and events. Facilities built to accommodate the events remain for the benefit of both residents and tourists, for example, the 1978 Commonwealth Games (Edmonton's Kinsmen Sports Centre), the 1985 University Games (Edmonton's "Butterdome" on the university campus), the 1988 Olympics (Calgary's luge and bobsled run and the Saddledome hockey arena). The economic argument that tourists will be able to use a facility is used in a number of cases as a partial justification for developing the facility. Long and Richardson (1988) clearly detail the link between recreation and tourism in urban environments, and the social and economic benefits of tourism-recreation developments.

On a smaller scale, towns and villages stage events that attract tourists to their community. Such festivals, rodeos, or country fairs are important economically. Attracting tourists from outside the area is most likely to be successful the larger, more varied, or unique the event.

Unlike the cities of Europe, and even the older cities of North America, Alberta's urban places do not often attract visitors interested in history and architecture. However, recent restoration and development programs for older buildings and neighborhoods have improved tourism potential (for example, tourists are drawn to the Old Strathcona District of Edmonton and the Louise Crossing in Calgary). The economic benefits of tourism can in turn act as a force to encourage heritage protection and restoration. In addition, restoration benefits local residents, as the Main Street Canada program demonstrates. For example, at Fort McLeod, not only have residents a renewed interest in their historical roots, but obsolete buildings have become useful once again, and new businesses have brought more variety to the community.

Other important tourism resources are the urban parks in seven cities of the province. These give residents and visitors the opportunity to enjoy natural and heritage environments within an urban setting. They also provide the diverse and pleasing visual elements to which tourists and residents alike are attracted while on vacation.

Concerns exist about social and physical pressures on the urban fabric of built environments. Pressures may be severe if there are distinct tourism seasons or peaks. The pressures on local facilities may exceed the community carrying capacity at critical periods; for instance, it may be difficult to access golf courses or lakeshore recreation areas, roads, or programs. These problems are usually less evident in larger urban environments that can accommodate greater numbers and the accompanying pressures on the infrastructure.

Interactions in the Rural Environment

In rural areas, scales of operation and attractions are usually smaller. The ability to attract and accommodate large numbers of tourists is therefore less, and the positive and negative impacts of tourism are potentially greater. Even small numbers of tourists can significantly boost rural economies, which may be especially important when the agricultural industry is financially depressed. Thus, the Alberta Country Vacation Association and the Alberta Guest Ranch Association promote farm and ranch vacations.

These operations range from personalized family vacations to large-scale camp or cabin vacations and day-visit opportunities. Many farmers do not make a great deal of money from farm vacations, but find that visitors can be accommodated easily, and find the personal interaction with tourists rewarding. Other benefits of farm and ranch vacations come from the greater probability that local services (coffee shops, res-

taurants, gas stations, retail outlets) will be able to stay in smaller communities. Tourism helps maintain the services in small communities.

Conflicts may arise when tourists try to access streams and rivers without obtaining the permission of landowners. In other cases road allowances have been closed and sometimes cultivated by the landowner. Consumptive and non-consumptive recreationists (for example, hunters or cross-country skiers) who use rural land may trample vegetation or harass animals. Similarly, grazing in forests can overlap with hunting seasons — cattle are being moved out as hunters move into the area, and there is the potential to accidentally shoot animals. In addition, water quality is lowered and fish habitat disturbed when livestock have access to stream headwaters. All recreationists may not be compatible, for example, in the Cooking Lake-Blackfoot multi-use provincial park, where hunting is allowed concurrently with hiking, riding, and cross-country skiing (Finlayson 1988).

The tourist's overall level of satisfaction with the vacation experience will depend in part on the aesthetic qualities of the trip and the destination. Relatively common landscapes should be valued, not just areas of scenic spendor. Whether or not the rural landscapes offer sufficient variety and visual attractiveness for the tourist in transit, and whether or not the access routes are safe and well maintained and convenient, contribute to satisfaction. Agricultural practices may reduce attractiveness of an area: standard field shapes and sizes, wetland drainage, and brush clearing are not aesthetically pleasing. These practices often also destroy wildlife habitat.

Interactions in Natural Areas

Perhaps no one is more disturbed by development than the tourist looking for natural area or wilderness values. The activities of industries in these areas can have a negative visual impact, for example, transmission lines, dams, and the unsightly appearance of fluctuating reservoir levels, seismic lines, or gravel pits and surface mines.

Some recreationists may welcome industrial activity. Hunters and anglers use the areas opened up by industrial roads and seismic lines, as do off-highway vehicle (OHV) users. Others lament the overhunting or poaching that is possible due to increased access on resource roads, intrusive noises in natural areas, or the loss of habitat due to industrial activity. For example, the decline of the woodland caribou of west-central Alberta is partly due to the harvesting of old-growth forests required to support the lichens on which the caribou feed.

The surface disturbances associated with industry also impact heritage resources, for example, trails, forts, graves, native spiritual sites, and buildings. Since Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism policy is only concerned with preservation or renovation of an *in situ* historic resource, there are no funds for relocating endangered heritage resources.

Another perspective is to see the industry as an attraction in itself. Some extractive industries could provide a positive experience for tourists through industrial, mine, and dam tours. These together with viewpoints and interpretive signage are excellent opportunities for industry to educate the public while providing an attractive tourism experience. At present, some industries have annual open houses or provide tours of their facilities, although the tours are often directed at professionals or are held in response to specific requests, rather than being scheduled for the general public. A co-operative provincial-level program of industrial tours of a wide range of industries would be attractive to tourists. Tourism Saskatchewan's annual "Great Saskatchewan Vacation Book" specifically focuses on the industrial/educational touring opportunities throughout the province. In Alberta, a visitor may discover an industrial tour by chance, as not all tours are promoted.

The forest environment covers over half the province. Forest environments are prime locations for much recreation and tourism activity. The Alberta Forest Service (AFS) provides many of the infrastructure elements attractive to tourists: campsites, equestrian and hiking trails, boat launches, and areas for snowmobiling or cross-country skiing. However, demand for camping op-

portunities in such environments is growing, and the AFS may not be able to keep up with this demand. Thus considerable random camping occurs in summer where auto access campgrounds are insufficient, for example in the Eastern Slopes. Uncontrolled camping may have negative environmental consequences such as erosion, destruction of vegetation, and soil compaction.

Private companies operating in areas subject to Forest Management Agreements or Timber Quotas may not always be the best managers of forested lands. The multiple use management approach practised in many forested locations concerns foresters because of the increasing demand for forest use by tourists.

However, use of the forest for recreation will continue to increase, and it is important to recognize that the multiple use concept is not appropriate for all forest areas. Some forest companies do provide good recreation opportunities, for example, Spring Lake near Grande Prairie.

Local-level recreation sites are only part of the answer. It would be preferable in some instances to designate specific use areas that would fit into regional and provincial objectives. Tourism industry representatives suggest that the concept of "dedicated areas" selected for their natural forest or wilderness values would do much to alleviate concerns.

Dearden (1983) feels the forest industry appears to be generally insensitive to retaining the integrity of the areas that attract tourists. It has been suggested that scenic assessments should be incorporated in environmental impact assessments before various types of development are permitted. Concerns about the forestry activities include:

- large cutblocks or clearcut areas are unattractive to tourists. Cutblocks of varying sizes and configurations would not only be more attractive, but might provide better wildlife habitat. Landscaping, (for example, road screens) could also help.
- granting Forest Management Agreement areas in huge blocks, which are usually contiguous, leaves few areas or corridors for other users.
- user time lines may not coincide in multiple use areas. For example, a tourist lodge may be located in an attractive area. However, within the life span of the lodge, the surrounding area and scenic vistas may become an unattractive logged expanse. Reserved forest areas and co-operative site selection might assist with this problem.

The forest industry could help to counteract some of the negative reactions of tourists. Providing plant tours, educational signage, interpretive trails, and auto tour routes with signed stopping spots and information packages could enhance tourism and educate visitors about the forest industry.

Economic arguments can be very persuasive, and various interest groups have already lobbied for extractive activities in national and provincial parks. Currently, logging, hunting, and trapping take place in Wood Buffalo National Park. Legislation allows hunting in Willmore Wilderness Park. In British Columbia, parts of Strathcona Provincial Park are to be downgraded to a Recreation Area, so that activities not compatible with park status (mining, logging, dam building, and other industrial activities) can take place. Will there be similar developments in Alberta's parks? Contrast the initiatives in Canada's parks with initiatives elsewhere. In Yosemite National Park, for instance, the number of visitors is being limited, and some facilities are even being phased out. Wilderness areas, too, are in very real danger of erosion by incremental incursion. It is critical that this be prevented, considering these areas are Alberta's major tourism attractions to the world (Tourism Canada n.d.). Wilderness cannot simply be the lands "left over" after development.

The Biosphere Reserve concept is one model that could be used to define the relationship between parks (or wilderness areas) and surrounding lands, and to clarify the appropriate levels of development within them. In this model, a core area of untouched wilderness is surrounded by lands in which various degrees of human activity are permitted, provided they do not seriously impact the protected core. A similar

concept has been usefully applied to ecologically valuable ancient forests. A preserved "island" is surrounded by a buffer zone, which is cut on a long rotation (over 240 years). The buffer enables the island to be smaller, and can be linked to other buffer zones and islands by corridors (Harris 1984).

5.3 Private Land and the Tourism Industry

Private land in rural areas contributes to tourism, for example, when it is used by hunters or where a farm is part of a country vacation experience. Often, however, the private landowner has tourism in mind as the primary use of his land. The private landowner tends to emphasize infrastructure rather than natural attractions. While different levels of government can provide varying degrees of subsidy, support, and investment in tourism infrastructure, it is appropriate for the private operators themselves to develop a tourist service or product, focus on the markets, and promote their product to the various market segments.

The private landowner provides opportunities from which he can generate income. These often combine recreation and entertainment (for example, Alberta Game Farm, Calaway Park, waterparks) and may attract tourists for reasons unrelated to the surrounding natural resources. Private tourist attractions tend to be more capital-intensive projects. They also require more management. The experiences they provide are usually more comfort oriented, and costly, than those available on public lands. Like publicly owned tourist attractions, they meet the needs and preferences of numerous tourism market segments.

Those in the tourism industry should understand the general principle that it is in the industry's own interest "to constantly ensure that development does not reach levels or take forms which would destroy that resource base" (Nish 1987:4). However, since the tourism industry is in fact an agglomeration of numerous industries and services, each operator tends to maximize his or her benefits. Each individual entrepreneur has relatively short planning horizons, which are largely related to profit making. Operators may manage their land base to their own benefit, but they are not generally concerned with the way this parcel fits into the overall scheme of long-term public interest. The result is ad hoc development.

The participants in the tourism industry do not necessarily share the same views on tourism goals. The challenge to government is to lead tourism in a direction that private industry will follow. The Tourism Industry Association should continue to educate itself about the value of resource conservation. However, it is the responsibility of the provincial government, through its broad land use policies and regulations, to ensure that land is used appropriately.

5.4 Public Land and the Tourism Industry

A land base is a prerequisite of tourism based on environmental features or recreational activities. Land in Alberta is held privately or is controlled by government departments other than Tourism, such as Forestry, Lands and Wildlife or Recreation and Parks. These departments may not have tourism goals or priorities in mind when setting objectives and policies, and in their decision making. Some argue that Alberta Tourism is preoccupied with infrastructure development; thus it is beneficial that other departments control the land base. However, from the tourism perspective, problems which can arise include:

- precedence being given to other land uses, like resource extractive industries, in prime tourism areas
- insufficient land base allocated for sustaining certain types of resources with value to tourism
- no recognition of the scenic and aesthetic qualities of an area as a vital tourism resource
- potential private operators (for example, backcountry lodges) being unable to obtain financing because the proposed land base is leased on a short-term basis from the Crown, not owned by the operator

- a long, involved application process required to obtain Crown land with no clear sequence or time line. This is confusing and discouraging to potential operators, and there is no preliminary indication of their likelihood of success, or of obstacles, on which to judge the investment of time and money at the outset. Provincial departments are beginning to regard tourism as a legitimate use of Crown land, however.
- the Department of Tourism is sometimes a bystander with respect to natural-resource-based tourism operations, with other departments having more input into critical decisions.

Where departments require detailed reclamation of sites disturbed by industry, the land may be only temporarily disturbed, and may subsequently have good tourism and other potential. In some cases, tourism development may provide an economic rationale for deciding not to allow exploitation for other purposes. Conversely, some argue that there is a case for preservation on the grounds that economic costs of preservation are low, while development costs are high. A further argument is that the opportunity cost of non-development — the denial of benefits to potential users — cannot be ignored (Ritchie 1984). But a counter argument is that non-development is like an investment in our future. Fundamentally, public land is a resource in trust for future generations. It is the government, therefore, that must ensure, through regulatory procedures, that any developments on public land are well managed, orderly, and appropriate for the surrounding environment.

The recent process of public input to the Department of Recreation and Parks Policy Statement has led to an excellent policy that reflects the wishes of Albertans. Ideas that developed, and which could be extended, are that government and private industry could form a more interactive partnership, with government agencies principally active as managers of the environment, while the private sector could develop services or facilities in specified zones. Such a co-operative partnership would assure the industry/operator of government support, yet would ensure appropriate services or developments for that land base. This concept of privatization could involve opportunities in the areas of accommodation, food and beverage services, outfitting, and retail sales, or the provision of attractions.

There is a view that, eventually, economic forces will win out over non-economic forces and that areas such as parks will have to justify their existence in economic terms, which clearly makes well-planned tourism development the preferable alternative to unplanned activities thrust on an area (Nish 1987; Ritchie 1984). While there is no argument against the preference for well-planned development, it should be noted that economic forces only win over non-economic forces when based on extremely short time-lines.

It is beneficial for Alberta to market our reputation of having a spectrum of tourism opportunities, to accommodate the range of market segment demands for perceived natural environment experiences. These may range from simply viewing seemingly untouched country from an automobile, or enjoying interpretations of natural areas, through remote accommodation and service-based recreation, to experiencing large areas of untouched lands. On one end of the spectrum, relatively small natural areas may be sufficient. Large tracts of land are required at the other end of the spectrum for conservation purposes.

However, designation of an area as a wildland or wilderness is not meant to exclude human involvement. Rather, the designation is intended to reduce the level of intensity of human involvement, and to shift the emphasis to human activities that create minimal disturbance. It is impossible to remove the human factor totally from the wilderness concept, because it is modern man who has created the idea of wilderness and instilled it with meaning.

It is also important for the tourism industry to provide a range of opportunities in different areas, so that people are allowed to get as close to a natural environment as they desire. These opportunities could be front country or back country lodges, chalets in scenic areas, commercial bases with recreation facilities, roadless primitive

recreation areas, or a wilderness backpacking vacation. They should be well planned, so that the process of sequential occupance of wilderness (where tourists are displaced to more distant wilderness areas as closer areas become degraded and crowded) does not occur (Marsh 1986; Butler 1980; Becker, Niemann, and Gates 1979).

Provincial lands suitable for a range of recreation, tourism, and other opportunities can be designated through zoning, or banked for current or future use.

5.5 Zoning for Land Management

Zoning recognizes different resource values, recreation uses, and specific management requirements for parcels of land, for instance, parks. Zoning allows for the regulation of the type and intensity of recreation as well as the type and degree of development to support tourism. Very often, where activities or uses conflict, (for example, trail bikes and hikers on the same trail) zoning separates them spatially. Zoning may result in the complete exclusion of facility-based tourism from some areas. An acceptance of limits (of conservation or development) is required.

Zoning within parks is another means of preserving a healthy balance between tourism and the needs of the natural environment. Areas within parks are classified to accommodate certain types and intensity of use. The intensity of use can be limited by controlling the number of visitors and imposing time restrictions on access. For example, areas can be closed when human presence might harass ungulates during critical times, or visitors can be dispersed over slower mid-week periods or to the shoulder seasons (Landals 1986; Marsh 1982). Effective zoning presupposes that users and managers recognize the sensitivity of ecosystems to a recreation presence (van der Zande and Vos 1984; McLaughlin and Singleton 1979; Bowles and Maun 1982) and requires a willingness to enforce limits to the activities permitted within each zone (de Groot 1983).

On the ground, however, it may be difficult to demarcate local zone boundaries. It may be even more difficult to manage zones on the ground, especially where the parks are small and natural boundaries like rivers are few (Landals 1986). Zoning is perhaps most successful at large scales where landforms can indicate the boundaries. However, one problem of large-scale zoning is that certain types of development that may be possible or, indeed, desirable in small areas within a zone may be excluded.

Various levels of government have different zoning procedures, all of which are intended to contribute to the sustainable use of land resources.

Federal Government

Canada, to its credit, was the second country in the world to create a national park system. The motivation was to attract tourists. Little thought went beyond this.

> *The said tract of land is hereby reserved and set aside as a public park and pleasure ground for the benefit, advantage and enjoyment of the people of Canada* (Rocky Mountain Park Act, 1887).

Even the word "park" indicated a kind of playground. In hindsight, it may now seem not the best word to use. The popular phrases "a playground for the people" or "parks are for people" have been widely used, and only serve to reinforce the idea that parks are mainly for the preservation of beauty and a destination for use by various types of pleasure seekers.

More recently, more comprehensive objectives for national parks have been developed. Parks Canada Policy states that a major program objective is "to protect for all time those places which are significant examples of Canada's natural and cultural heritage and also to encourage public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of this heritage in ways which leave it unimpaired for future generations" (Parks Canada 1980). The emphasis in national parks is on the *protection* of natural and cultural resources within the parks.

There is much concern over the current and potential conflict between tourism developments and environmental conservation, as reflected in a

recent symposium sponsored by the Canadian Society of Environmental Biologists, entitled "Tourism and the Environment: Conflict or Harmony?" This potential conflict is also suggested by the theme of the 19th Canadian Federal-Provincial Parks Conference: "Parks and Tourism in the 80's: Prostitution or Progress?" Similarly, Landals (1986) challengingly asks if "The Bloody Tourists are Ruining the Parks." The trend may indeed be that the relationship between tourists and park resources is moving from co-existence to conflict. Conflict is most likely where the park is small, and tourism is large scale, or where tourism is facility oriented, and parks are oriented toward nature preservation (Eidsvik 1983). Protection is to take precedence in conflict situations (although there are instances where this principle is not followed, for example, at Sunshine Village). Parks policy, tourism policy, and environmental policy should be fully co-ordinated in the interest of all three public objectives (Tourism Canada n.d.).

Parks Canada also establishes National Historic Parks for the preservation of cultural resources. However, in Alberta, despite the wealth of cultural resources, there is only one: Rocky Mountain House National Historic Park. This number appears rather inadequate when the eastern provinces have dozens of National Historic Parks. The protection and presentation of Alberta's historic or heritage resources deserves more federal emphasis. Indeed, it is recognized that the tourism potential for culture has not yet been fully realized (Tourism Canada n.d.).

Provincial Government

The provincial Department of Tourism operates with the constraint of no land base; therefore it has to "piggyback" on other departments that manage lands, such as Recreation and Parks or Forestry, Lands and Wildlife.

Forestry, Lands and Wildlife manages a very large portion of public lands. There is no zoning system for most of this area. However, subsequent to the broad management policy developed for the Eastern Slopes in 1977, more detailed land management plans are being developed. These are Integrated Resource Plans (IRPs). They define land use priorities, which are delineated through zoning guidelines. Alberta Tourism's involvement in the planning process has changed significantly, from consultative to participative.

The intent of the IRPs with respect to tourism is to maintain areas with significant tourism potential for possible future use for recreation and tourism. Additional efforts are made to ensure that new corridors are maintained along major travel routes, that industrial resource-based developments are screened from highways, and that allowance is made for adequate service facilities. To these ends, input is sought from many groups, including the private sector.

There are, however, a number of problems in the Integrated Resource Planning process. Alberta Tourism is only one of a number of departments represented, and the strength of the departmental representatives around the planning table is acknowledged to have a bearing on some of the priorities developed by the team. In addition, in the Eastern Slopes, industrial resource extraction (for example, coal mining) is given precedence. Also, frequent exceptions are made to the IRP land use zones — exploration and development may be allowed in a Prime Protection Zone. In addition, after the IRP is completed, government may decide to change priorities in favor of development.

The management of Alberta's natural resources has given little priority to maintaining Alberta's value as a tourism destination. Development priority is most often given to needs of other industries, for example, along the Eastern Slopes, a prime recreation region. Integrated resource management advocates multiple use. But this concept should not be applied everywhere; in some areas, uses may be incompatible, although not mutually exclusive. In other areas, priority must be given to conservation of the natural resources for their current or future recreation, tourism, and other values. Again, an acceptance of limits (of conservation or development) is required.

Alberta Recreation and Parks also manages large areas of public lands. It has a mandate to preserve and protect our natural heritage, and to

present those values for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations. Its program objectives for the Conservation-Outdoor Recreation System (commonly called the parks system) are: protection, provision of outdoor recreation, heritage appreciation opportunities, and tourism opportunities (Alberta Recreation and Parks 1986). The classification of lands to achieve these objectives is:

1) Ecological Reserves
2) Wilderness Areas
3) Provincial Parks,
4) Recreation Areas.

Given that one of the program objectives is tourism opportunities, and given that virtually all Albertans who use the Conservation-Outdoor Recreation System are tourists by definition, it is fair to state that the overall system is underdeveloped for recreation and tourism. There are limited services in accommodation, food, retail sales, commercial recreation, interpretation, and other amenities in or adjacent to the park system.

In addition, it lags behind other provinces and the federal government in identifying, developing, and marketing specific parks as tourist attractions (Pannell Kerr Forster 1986). Within the parks system (although not necessarily within one parcel of land), a complete spectrum from development to non-development should be envisaged.

However, it is important that the scales do not tip too far in the direction of development, with too much emphasis on future infrastructure and services. A balance is required and can be achieved through zoning. The Department is in the process of developing a zoning framework for this purpose.

The Policy Statement rightly recognizes that its program objectives cannot be met simply by setting aside and managing specific areas. The basic principles must be applied to all land. Thus we return to the concept of the government having responsibility for more comprehensive zoning procedures for all lands, to ensure sustainable use of the land resource.

5.6 Co-ordination and Communication

Problems within the tourism industry that are being tackled include diversity within the industry, and lack of unity. However, Tourism Canada (n.d.) states that the biggest single problem facing tourism has been a lack of co-ordinated effort with all levels of government. Co-ordinated effort is also required within government. As Kelly (1988) indicates, currently "our departmental system of government ensures that we will have single-sector decision-making."

Alberta Tourism has tremendous influence in promoting tourism, but is dependent upon other departments' management of the land base. It is clear that departments such as Recreation and Parks or Forestry, Lands and Wildlife have a vital role to play in the tourism industry. Yet their tourism mandates are not clear. Each department should recognize the value of their jurisdiction to tourism, and should consider policy to facilitate appropriately planned developments.

Also, the respective priorities and responsibilities for natural and historical/cultural resource protection of Alberta Tourism, Alberta Recreation and Parks, and Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism need to be clarified. Alberta Tourism interacts with both of these departments to present and promote resources. There is a similar interface between Tourism and Forestry, Lands and Wildlife. The latter has the responsibility for the land base to which tourists are attracted, and on which developments are built. Cross-sectoral management is a key tool for sustained development of resources, but cross-sectoral responsibility or accountability may be required before it becomes truly effective.

Some years ago, co-operation, communication, co-ordination, and a comprehensive approach were considered buzz words (Fardoe 1985). However, their value has not decreased over time. These four big "Cs" help cut across sectoral interests, and would facilitate interactions between resource users if practised at many levels, for example:

Inter-departmental: particularly those departments concerned with tourism resources: Tourism, Culture and Multiculturalism, Recreation and Parks, and Forestry, Lands and Wildlife. Also important are Transportation and Utilities, Environment, Energy, and Economic Development and Trade.

Within departments: for example, where objectives of various divisions may not coincide. Conflicts in land use planning for such activities as off-highway vehicle use and ungulate regeneration are reflected in conflicts within Forestry, Lands and Wildlife between the Alberta Forest Service and the Fish and Wildlife Division.

Between municipalities: communities tend to have a selfish attitude to tourism opportunities and want to have as much as possible for themselves. It makes more sense for communities to co-operate to achieve significance as a tourism *region*, with a varied package of attractions, preferably with links within (and between) regions. Current Community Tourism Action Plans suggest regional co-operation is desirable. However, this integrative and co-operative aspect needs to be regarded as more of a necessity, so that a region may become a significant attraction where a single community could not. Regional Planning Commissions could have a facilitating role.

Between levels of government: desirable between all levels, municipal, provincial and federal. A federal-provincial initiative with great potential tourism and conservation benefits is the Agreements for Recreation and Conservation (ARC). They are designed to provide Parks Canada with greater flexibility in managing its areas than it had under the Historic Sites and Monuments Act or the National Parks Act. ARC objectives are to protect and encourage enjoyment of natural and cultural resources, including heritage rivers, heritage trails, and co-operative heritage areas. Only Alberta and British Columbia do not participate. In Alberta, designating Heritage Rivers and Trails would have tremendous tourism and conservation utility.

Between industry and levels of government: for example, a forest industry may welcome early input into local or regional plans involving recreational lands. In this way, a location may be selected that is appropriate for recreation, but for which there are no long-term plans for clear cutting. This process is far preferable to conflict in the future. Industry must be involved in a co-operative approach, and tourism and industry can be mutally beneficial.

Between government and the public: one of the problems that plagues the potential commercial operator is the process of becoming established. There is a complex application process for operating licences that can be very time consuming. It would be advantageous to have fewer, or only one "window" for potential developers.

In addition, innovative and co-operative public-private partnerships, for example between Recreation and Parks and the private sector, as proposed in the draft departmental policy, will improve Alberta as a tourist destination. The government found that inviting the private sector to operate the government-built Mount Kidd Campground allowed some capital cost to be recovered through rental payments, and allowed the operator to make a profit. The government has been reconsidering its role as a "doer," but should expand its role as a facilitator. "Our hope for the future is that government will continue to be a partner, playing a strong role in planning, but also to be a partner in exercising some restraint" (Stiles 1985:36).

Chapter Six

Legislative and Regulatory Regime

Government is involved in tourism through owning and managing facilities, attractions, and information centers; marketing the tourism product; doing research; and monitoring services. There may be no other sector of the economy that is influenced by all levels of government as is tourism (Tourism Canada n.d.). The intent of this section is not to advocate further government control of the private sector, but to illustrate that government can greatly assist the industry to take initiatives that support overall provincial objectives, to the benefit of the visitor, the host, and the resources.

Governments perform two major roles for tourism: regulation and development. Certain regulatory elements are viewed as restrictive by the industry; however, controls are sometimes necessary. Both the regulatory and the development roles of the government should be positive for the industry overall.

6.1 Legislation

As already outlined, government legislation affects the conservation of cultural resources. Government legislation also has far-reaching effects on many other aspects of tourism. Those in the industry are concerned about any regulations that make it difficult for them to develop and/or operate tourism facilities and services. Areas of concern include:

- The 5 percent motel/hotel accommodation tax, which singles out the accommodations industry and could reduce travel or length of stay. This tax could be put to good use if earmarked entirely for the tourism industry. In April, 1987, the Montana Legislature approved a 4 percent tax on overnight accommodation and earmarked the proceeds for tourism promotion. This plan had support of the Montana Innkeepers Association and is expected to raise about $4.8 million. Of this amount, 2 percent goes to universities for travel research and 1 percent goes to the Montana Historical Society for roadside signs and sites. Of the remainder, 75 percent goes to the Department of Commerce for travel and motion picture promotion, and 25 percent to in-state, not-for-profit organizations for travel promotion (Shimek 1987).
- Insurance, which is increasingly a problem for all areas of tourism, including, for example, for farm vacations where horses are on the premises (even though riding is not part of the program), for the range of groups that may be liable in an industrial tour setting, or for the Crown, in the case of liability for accidents in natural environments. The TIAALTA insurance search service is one industry initiative that has proven helpful, but there is concern that the government will need to become involved in the increasingly prohibitive upward spiral of insurance premiums.
- The regulations that prevent Sunday opening of lounges, which have a negative effect on tourism.
- The removal of the business entertainment tax, so that corporate tax deductions for business meals can no longer be made.
- The hunting and fishing regulations, which have had numerous changes recently. Residents and tourists are confused about what is allowed, and when, and they are concerned about contravening regulations related to limits, season, and so on. Regulation changes may have been too numerous over too short a period of time to be well ac-

cepted and understood. In addition, Sunday closure of hunting has a negative impact on tourism.

- Regulations related to wages and holiday pay and overtime concern those in the tourism industry, since tourists require service at times when the majority of the labor force may not be working. These concerns are being addressed in Bill 60,

6.2 Development

The tourism industry can grow in the areas of promotion, education, services, facilities, and infrastructure. Legislation can assist and even create tourism development, for example, at Kananaskis Country. In the early 1970s, the public showed concern for the future of the Eastern Slopes, and the creation of Kananaskis Country in 1977 was the government's response. It was intended to be a provincial recreation area, but it has become a tourist attraction due largely to the quality of its facilities and services.

However, in some cases the locations of developments appear to be based on political (cabinet level) decisions, rather than on demonstrated need or an overall provincial tourism development policy (consider, for example, locations of some interpretive centers). This politically based decision making is likely to be seen in future developments of country areas, major parks, or interpretive centers. It would be highly preferable, and would demonstrate long-term vision, to examine demand trends, the type of tourism experiences desired, and the land areas that can meet these needs, and to develop a provincial tourism policy. Major decisions should be based on these results.

Procedures affecting or enabling development that concern the tourism industry include:

- Present and potential tourism operators often find that they have no clear understanding of tourism-related programs, assistance, funding sources, or procedures. It would be beneficial to collate all this information into one reference source.
- There is concern that resources or assistance be distributed more equitably throughout the province, or at least be distributed in accordance with a clearly understood provincial tourism policy.
- The industry feels the need for increased awareness of the benefits of tourism and the hospitality industry, through wide-ranging education programs.

Currently, the provincial Department of Tourism budgets are being cut, as is funding for the travel industry associations throughout the province. In the private sector, increased returns come largely through investment and promotion. Similarly, if the provincial government hopes to realize its objective of an annual $10 billion tourism industry by the year 2000 (a five-fold increase in revenues), it must be prepared to invest in tourism. This investment should be in the form of land, people, infrastructure, services, finances, educational (university) programs, research, and marketing. It is questionable, however, whether a growth rate of almost 500 percent over 12 years is realistic, and whether it is sustainable.

A recently announced $64 million provincial program funded by lottery proceeds should do much to enable tourism development throughout the province. The areas to be funded are:

Alberta Tourism Advertising Campaign	$3.5 million
Alberta Awareness Program	$10.5 million
Team Tourism Marketing Program	$20 million
Community Tourism Action Program	$30 million

These funds are to be distributed over five years.

Government decisions to absorb infrastructural costs allow various types of development. Roads are one of the keys to enabling tourism markets to have access to destinations, and are the responsibility of various levels of government. Certain areas of the province, for example, along the Eastern Slopes, have some access, but not in the form of all-weather roads. Tourism development would be enhanced and pressures on key routes would be relieved, were the road network to be improved. Selection of appropriate routes for upgrading should be part of a provincial tourism plan. In certain locations it may not be appropriate to enable access by large numbers of independent travellers. It may be more appropriate to provide a public transportation system to at-

tractive but more sensitive environments, as is done at Mount McKinley.

Similarly, tourism development could be facilitated and enriched if both the directional and interpretive signage system were improved. There are insufficient directional signs to places, attractions, and tour routes, as many regional tourism plans have mentioned. There is absolutely inadequate interpretive signage throughout the province. The reasons for this include the fact that local groups must initiate requests, a reluctance on the part of Alberta Transportation to provide signs, and a lack of budget in Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism to respond to requests made for signage. A provincially co-ordinated signage effort would do much to enhance the tourism experience.

In Canada, several provinces have joined forces with the federal government in an effort to encourage more domestic tourism and to develop attractions of international standing. Alberta has been a latecomer to the Travel Industry Development Subsidiary Agreements (TIDSA). Alberta's subagreement was signed in the spring of 1985 for $56 million (50/50 split). The objective of the five-year subagreement is to stimulate private sector investment in the development and marketing of tourism attractions and facilities. The six programs that receive funding are:

1) Facilities and Product Development	46 %
2) Alpine Ski Facility Development	12 %
3) Marketing Development	21 %
4) Training and Professional Development	5 %
5) Industry and Community Support	5 %
6) Opportunity Analysis and Evaluation	7 %

The administration of the program is allocated 4 percent. The distribution of the funding is currently being re-evaluated, and it is probable that programs (1) and (3) will be allocated additional funds.

The subagreement goal of national and international tourism in Alberta has implications for additional development of tourism facilities and services in Alberta. One consequence is that, because a region's resources are not considered to have national or international appeal, much of the province does not have access to this tourism funding. This qualification means that those regions capable of *detaining* the national or international tourists once they have come to Alberta are not assisted in their efforts. Since vast areas of northern Alberta are unable to qualify, it also means that the objectives of attracting Albertans to recreate and vacation in areas of their own province other than those with national or international appeal are not furthered.

In addition, those regions known to have national or international appeal (mainly Calgary, Banff, Edmonton, Jasper) will receive greatest funding. This concentration may not be entirely wise with respect to sustained use, since their resources may become very overused, and the social carrying capacity may be exceeded both for hosts and visitors.

Although the natural environment of the province is the foundation of its national and international appeal, the emphasis of funding programs is on providing and improving infrastructure, and little on maintaining the attractive nature of the scenic environment. As Dearden (1983) points out, while the provision of infrastructure is a necessary component of a healthy industry, it cannot be concentrated on at the expense of the basic attractions of the environment. This danger makes it all the more important to have well-planned provincial tourism objectives and a strategy in which to fit the infrastructure being developed.

6.3 Provincial Strategic Planning Framework

The tourism industry is multifaceted, and involves a complex set of interrelationships between its component parts. Consequently, the tourism industry has an uneven profile, which is largely the result of limited knowledge of the industry and of the inconsistent image it projects. The tourism industry occupies a unique position in the economy, taking in a cross-section of skills, industries, and people. Recognition of this diversity has led to informal federal and provincial recommendations that a Tourism Act be developed. An advantage of

such an act would be that businesses forming part of the industry would be identified.

It is clear that, at regional and local levels, planning and zoning is required. However, a much broader policy framework and a recreation/tourism land development strategy are also required. The plans, policies, and overall strategy should be aimed at coping with larger visitor volumes, dispersing visitors over a wider area to ease the pressure points, and developing new destinations.

The tourism industry, being the sum of a great many diverse parts, must as a whole fit into strategic planning objectives for the province. But, other than overall economic growth, these strategic planning objectives currently do not exist. If this framework is not developed, then the often-criticized, ad hoc tourism developments will continue to proliferate, and opportunism will flourish. In this scenario, the destructive potential of tourism could materialize. Far-sighted representatives of the tourism industry recognize this possibility and have proposed that a provincial Master Tourism Industry Development Plan be developed. It would be intended to designate areas with potential for tourism developments, and to provide some form of zoning of tourism resources. This plan would be a step toward setting up provincial strategic planning objectives.

If tourism is to have powerful conservation and economic benefits, there should be zoning to allow appropriate developments to take place, with the reassurance for the private sector that they fit well within the framework of a broader, provincial set of objectives.

6.4 Land Banks

When Alberta's tourism regions or landscapes are seen in a global perspective, it is evident that the foundation of our tourism is the natural environment. Whatever the short-term development possibilities, this resource must be used wisely. To allow activities to erode the natural environment is equivalent to the province living off its capital rather than its interest.

Recognition of this fact leads to the conclusion that many more land areas need to be designated for conservation. Although land banking is usually an urban concept, it is relevant in non-urban environments. The basic principle involves the acquisition or designation of public land, ahead of use, as a protective measure. If land is not designated ahead of use, then the problem of compensation arises. These areas should be selected through consideration of the specific resource values, and a provincial policy framework. Such areas may vary in size, as the specific resource and the intended purpose varies. Indeed, it may be sufficient to bank only the "core" of an area. All have a place in the spectrum of recreation and tourism opportunities.

These reserved public lands need not be developed to their end use in the short or even in the long term; indeed, development may not be appropriate for many areas. However, their designation ensures their availability as needed, as part of the spectrum of provincial recreation/tourism opportunities and conservation areas. If the concept is accepted, then the most important questions become how much land, and where?

Chapter Seven

Conclusion

7.1 Alberta's Environment

Tourists choose to travel, and choose particular travel experiences, based on both "push" and "pull" factors. But they almost always choose a particular destination because of features of its environment, whether they be climate, landscapes, man-made attractions, or people and their customs. Any tourism impact that degrades these resources also has a destructive effect upon tourism potential.

> *The problem of tourism in parks today results from too many tourists seeking to undertake too much, or inappropriate, recreation activity, thereby degrading the park environment or tourism experience beyond governmentally or publicly acceptable limits* (Marsh 1983:287).

This problem is found outside parks, too. One problem is that scenic changes can be very small; thus the process is very insidious (Dearden 1983) and erosion of the resource base is incremental.

Alberta's total environment must be considered its tourism resource — mountains, prairies, forests, lakes and rivers, climate, fish and wildlife, people, cultural groups and mixes, historic structures and sites, architectural styles, urban opportunities, city parks, man-made or built attractions and services, and many more. These should be seen as a system, all parts of which are required.

7.2 Conflict Between Tourism and Environmentalists

Public perception of what constitutes the tourist industry and how it works is poor. Ignorance is one of the roots of negative attitudes toward tourism. Tourism and the environment can both conflict with and complement each other. The public's desire for a high-quality experience and for education can be put to good use, for example, explaining ecology to tourists.

All too often, tourism initiatives "hit the headlines" as diverse groups show concern or opposition to tourism proposals. Certain groups equate tourism development with environmental degradation, and views can become entrenched in a "for" or "against" situation. Not only this, but certain "environmental" groups feel that any development in a hitherto underdeveloped area is undesirable. Adopting such extremist positions on both the development and non-development sides is most likely to lead to disaster for both groups and for society as a whole (Ritchie 1984). Both sides need to understand the needs of the other, and the long-term public vision and consequences for the area under question.

There is room in Alberta for a diverse and vibrant tourism industry, catering to a variety of market demands and preferences. To take steps toward achieving this goal, we need:

- a greater understanding of the role, potential benefits, and potential disadvantages of tourism
- a provincial planning framework or systems plan for tourism in which developments may be appropriately placed (rather than current opportunistic development) as part of a spectrum of development/non-development
- determination of the carrying capacity (physical and social) of specific areas
- the public acceptance of limits (of development and of preservation)

- different levels of development, through such tools as zoning for development appropriate to the range of environments in Alberta
- encouragement of developments that are intrinsic (rather than extrinsic) to the natural environment
- interpretation and explanation of the environments (from natural to urban) as an educational tool and an attraction
- improved communications between all those involved in the tourism industry (private sector, government) so that a unified voice and image is perceived
- higher visibility of the tourism industry
- ongoing evaluation.

7.3 Integrating Conservation and Development

Development is not, by definition, incompatible with environmental protection; indeed, tourism can be seen as an insurance policy, over the long term, for the environment. People and nature are interdependent, and sustainable development is possible if nature is used in the right way. Sustainable development is the focus of the World Conservation Strategy, and "to be sustainable, development must be based on conservation of living resources and associated life-support systems" (Lang 1983). Thus conservation and development are mutually reinforcing activities, not two opposing sides, and the focus is on planning to conserve for, rather than against, appropriate development.

However, sustained development must be "understood and planned for with a distinctly environmental and biospheric perspective" (Dearden 1987:15). In September, 1987, the Canadian Council of Resource and Environment Ministers endorsed a report by its National Task Force on Environment and Economy that reflects these principles. The report recommended that environmental considerations and economic decision making be integrated, so that environmentally sound economic development would result.

7.4 Summary

Tourism in Alberta is a matter of federal, provincial, municipal, and private sector interests whose joint objective should be to sustain the orderly growth of tourism in Alberta. Too often, tourism is equated with exploitation for profit and reckless disregard for environmental concerns. However, making profits and conserving the environment are not mutually exclusive. Sound economics, in fact, is necessary for long-term environmental health, and can be a similar ally of the tourism industry.

Tourism developments and activities can destroy the very resources upon which they are based. But, conversely, tourism can be seen as one of the most powerful forces in the world today for protecting landscapes and conserving resources. The government needs a business partner on side with similar interests and long-term objectives. We must enable tourism to develop as a positive force for the environment, as well as for the economy.

Alberta is recognized as having numerous immature tourism products that require appropriate development and infrastructure. Much of the provincial park system reflects this immature status although, since one of the four program objectives of the system is to provide tourism opportunities, this may be changing. However, within the tourism industry and Alberta Tourism, the major emphasis is on infrastructure and man-made resource attractions. The other end of the spectrum, the natural environment that attracts so many tourists to our province, receives little attention. The challenge is to recognize the importance of both the natural and man-made ends of the spectrum, and to balance our emphasis. Both the tourism industry and the government must take an active role in ensuring that the integrity of the natural environment (the primary tourist resource) is identified and protected.

Tourism is just one of many pressures for change in our environment. It is increasing; it will not go away, nor should we want it to. It is projected to have greater growth potential than any other industry. Tourists are changing, and

demanding greater quality in their recreation, and more "experience-based" recreation; thus, the critical importance of the natural and cultural resource base upon which tourism experiences are founded. Recognizing the importance of the resource base will require a change of attitudes at all levels, and it is to be hoped that such a change will come about before we have lost the resource base in question.

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